youth & policy

The Journal of Critical Analysis

Autumn 1996

Issue Number: 54

CONTENTS

ISSN 0262-9798

Monica Barry
The Empowering Process:
Leading from behind? 1

Sarah Banks
Youth Work, Informal Education and Professionalisation
The issues in the 1990s 13

Judith Bessant and Megan Evans
Gendering the Youth Work Curricula in Australia
A case study 26

Gary Pollock
Unemployed and under 18:
Struggling between Subsistence and Destitution 38

Working Space · Matt Vaughan
Finding your way around
Starting Out in Detached Work 54

Book Reviews 58

Subscription Page 112

© Youth & Policy 1996

Editorial and Production Group:
Sarah Banks, Richard Barber, Lucy Ford, Ruth Gilchrist, Umme Imam, Tony Jeffs, Tia Khan, Angela Montgomery, Chris Parkin, Gordon Stoner.

Editorial Associates: Inge Bates, Shane Blackman, Bob Coles, Lynne Chisholm, Judith Ennew, Dick Hobbs, Mark Smith, Fred Robinson, Shirley Tate, Patrick West, Lionel Van Reenen.

Youth & Policy, is devoted to the critical study of youth affairs and youth policy in Britain and in an international context. The journal strives to maintain balance between academic contributions and debates focussed upon policy, practice and the issues confronting young people in society. It is a non-profit making journal which has no paid employees.

Submissions which are insensitive to equal opportunities issues and which are considered to be offensive to any social group on the basis of class, race, gender, sexuality or disability will not be considered and contributors must avoid the use of discriminatory language.

Material from the Journal may be extracted for study and quotation with acknowledgement of the journal and the author(s). The views expressed in the journal remain those of the authors and not necessarily those of the editorial group. Whilst every effort is made to check factual information, the editorial group is not responsible for errors in the material published in the journal.

For details of subscriptions, submission of material for publication and advertising see the inside back cover.

We acknowledge the support of Gateshead Law Centre for providing a venue for meetings.

Typeset and Printed by:
The Art Department, 1 Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DW. Telephone: (0191) 230 4164.

Proofread by:
Seaham Proofreaders, 5 Dene Terrace, Seaham, County Durham, SR7 7BB.

Youth & Policy, 10 Lady Beatrice Terrace, New Herrington, Houghton le Spring, DH4 4NE

THE EMPOWERING PROCESS:

Leading from behind?

MONICA BARRY

Abstract
Over the last thirty years or so, the active participation and empowerment of citizens within a democratic context has been of increasing interest to academics, practitioners and policy makers alike. This article examines one particular form of empowerment - social action - and draws on the experience of the writer who recently worked with a group of 16 and 17 year olds in a social action context in Scotland. It is argued that the involvement of disadvantaged young people in particular, in an empowering way in negotiating change, needs to be undertaken in partnership with other interested parties, giving equal attention to young people's agendas. It is argued that 'textbook' social action is less effective if workers themselves set a political agenda for change whilst encouraging young people to 'front' the exercise: what the author would call 'leading from behind'. Young people who are currently defined by professionals as 'disempowered' may equally view their position as, for example, social isolation or personal failure, rather than disempowerment per se. They may well want to join the existing social order rather than to fight it, and to do so in an effective manner requires partnership through co-operation not empowerment through confrontation.

Introduction
Young people today are being brought up in one particular ideological and political environment: Conservatism. 'Communal solidarity', which flourished in the 1970s, has been replaced by 'competitive individualism' (Ward, 1995) and Margaret Thatcher heralded that change when she said that there was no such thing as society. Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are becoming increasingly marginalised from mainstream opportunities and the future looks bleak for them. In the summer of 1995 the rate of unemployment for 16 and 17 year olds in the UK was 23 per cent, comprising 180,000 young people - almost 2,000 higher than in the previous year. Of these young people, 89 per cent were without any form of income (Convery & Chatrik, 1995).

Leaving school marks the end of childhood for many young people, and yet 16 and 17 year olds are increasingly seen by the state as still financially dependent on their families. At the same time, they are the focus of high levels of consumerism, being encouraged to aspire to goods and styles often beyond their means. The promotion of Thatcherite policies in relation to young people signalled a shift in legislation to lessen state intervention in welfare or family matters, to encourage young people to compete on the open market with their older, more experienced counterparts, and to lay the responsibility for survival, if not advancement, firmly at the feet of the individual rather than the state. As Williamson (1993) points out:

> *... social disadvantage and marginality [are] increasingly presented as pathological... individuality, rationality, personal choice and self-determination prevail - and it is for individuals to take the consequences of their autonomous actions (p.35).*

Whilst more advantaged young people may have the education, motivation and financial backing to make the desired transition from school to employment and

eventual independence, young people from areas of multiple deprivation have fewer opportunities to leave either the family home or the local area. The high rates of crime and deprivation and the paucity of locally-based opportunities in such areas may equally stigmatise and further isolate such communities. In the experience of young people from such peripheral housing schemes seeking employment within the city centre, their address alone is likely to deter potential employers from considering them for work, which again exacerbates feelings of marginalisation or exclusion from mainstream society.

There is a dilemma between on the one hand the 'paternalistic' approach to young people as 'children' (a definition which varies considerably within different cultures) and on the other hand the lack of state protection given to school-leavers who are without employment or independent means. As Franklin (1986) points out in relation to children's subjection to this rigid philosophy of paternalism:

> *Adults do not perceive children as a minority group but as helpless, inexperienced, defenceless young people who need protection. Adult paternalism seeks to protect and if in this process it curtails freedom, truncates potentials [sic] and destroys civil liberties this is taken to be incidental. The belief in the legitimacy of paternalism justifies and cements the existing power relationships between adults and young people. This attitude must be confronted, challenged and refuted if young people are to secure their political rights (p. 49).*

However, 16 and 17 year olds seem to fall between the two stools of childhood and adulthood, gaining neither protection as children nor autonomy as adults. Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that countries should:

> *...assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child.*

Yet the Children's Rights Development Unit (1994) acknowledges that adolescent children have few, if any, avenues open to them to influence local or central government policy and that:

> *Existing Government policy appears at present to be acting against the best interests of 16-18 year olds, in relation to withdrawal of welfare benefits, lack of affordable and habitable housing, and adequate support for the most vulnerable members of this group - care leavers (p. 7-8).*

It was in this climate of political, social and financial deprivation that the concept of 'social action' was developed to work particularly with young people from minority groupings such as those leaving care or those who are homeless.

The Empowering Process

Empowerment and participation are long-standing rhetorical expressions within political and ideological circles. Both words trip readily off the tongues of policy makers and practitioners as a solution to marginalisation, but the causes of *dis*empowerment or *non*-participation are rarely explored with similar panache. The word empowerment often 'acts as a "social aerosol", covering up the disturbing smell of conflict and conceptual division' (Mullender & Ward, 1991, p.1). Equally, it is argued that, in drawing people into existing systems of decision-making through participation, their propensity and ability to criticise the status quo may be diluted (Kreisberg, 1992), and it is this ambiguous nature of 'participation' which appeals to politicians from all parties:

...this is because there is a measure of agreement within the political spectrum about the value of participation, and enthusiasm for it, a consensus promoted by the lack of specificity about the aims to be achieved (Hallett, 1984, p. 13).

This has been defined by Burke (1968) as 'co-optation' - capturing or neutralising opponents by including them as participants but without being seen to 'surrender' power.

'Participation' is often illustrated as a hierarchical framework, from tokenistic involvement to full control, resulting from a re-distribution of power within the status quo, whilst 'empowerment', on the other hand, often suggests a reformulation of the existing order. For the purposes of this article, 'participation' is defined as the inclusion of people both in taking action to address issues of concern and in determining the outcome, alongside other interested parties. 'Empowerment' is here defined as the end result of participative practices where each participant gains control and/or influence over issues of concern to them. It is stressed that both terms are seen as having a cumulative dimension. These definitions suggest that empowerment cannot be achieved without having participation as a precursor; and that the level of participation will determine the level, if at all, of eventual empowerment.

Power and Empowerment

Theories of power fall mainly into two parts, where power is either seen as a fixed commodity, where any increase of power to one party necessarily results in a loss of power to the other; or alternatively power is seen as a relational concept which can be developed and shared equally. Lukes (1974) sees power as essentially determined within the socially and culturally structured actions of groups; it is this social and cultural determinant that gives such power its legitimacy. He identifies three dimensions of power, all of which emphasise conflict or coercion:

1 situations of observable decision-making, focused on key issues over which there is overt conflict concerning the subjective interests of the individuals or groups involved;

2 situations of 'non-decision-making', in which only some potential issues become explicit, where there is covert as well as overt conflict concerning the subjective interests of individuals or groups;

3 situations in which the social agenda is established (that is, potential and explicit issues are created), in which there is actual (overt and covert) and also latent conflict over both objective and subjective interests of individuals or groups (See, especially, Lukes, 1974, p. 25; Hugman, 1991, pp. 30-31).

Habermas (1977) develops this notion of conflicting interests by suggesting that information communication is distorted or manipulated towards the achievement of the specified goals of the dominant parties rather than towards reaching a balanced consensual agreement.

The social and political context within which power is exercised is crucial to an understanding of power relationships, in terms of, for example, organisational structures, gender, professionalism and race (Hugman, 1991). Bowes (1996), in drawing on the work of Bhavnani, suggests that:

raising voices... does not constitute empowerment, unless the analysis then produced takes full account of the power context in which the views have been expressed (para. 2.4).

Traditionally, theories of empowerment concentrated on liberal and marxist paradigms, in terms of critical consciousness, political education and the distribution of power (see, for example, Freire, 1973). However, more recently they have taken on a more personal developmental perspective which emphasises the process rather than the outcome of empowerment. Conger (1989), for example, defines empowerment as:

the act of strengthening an individual's beliefs in his or her sense of effectiveness (p. 18).

This latter emphasis on the importance of the process rather than the outcome of empowerment has been adopted by political parties, and as Morley (1995) suggests, in particular by the New Right in order to focus attention on the individual rather than weakening social structures:

Empowerment... becomes part of the language of efficiency, cost-effectiveness, quality and standards, employed to mask the extent to which the government has sought to prepare for privatisation and the erosion of the welfare state (p. 2).

Morley powerfully criticises the 'manipulative, victim-blaming ideology' contained in New Right policies which:

[suggest] that oppressed groups have the power to change their material circumstances through psychological restructuring.... The New Right's usage has normative connotations and disregards structures of inequality and social diversity (p. 8).

It is within the context of this controversy over the aims of empowerment that social action with disadvantaged young people was revived during the Thatcher years.

Social Action and Empowerment

In relation to community work, from which social action developed, Twelvetrees (1991) identified two forms of community work, firstly, 'professional' (which promotes self-help and improves the effectiveness and appropriateness of services but within the existing social order) and secondly, 'radical' (which emphasises the need for change to the existing social order), in other words:

...empowering the powerless to question the causes of their deprivation, and to challenge the sources of their oppression, with a focus upon anti-racist and anti-sexist work (Mayo, 1994, p. 70).

The radical definition of community work stresses a non-directive approach to instigating change, but such methods are criticised because:

...in an unequal society, community workers who are totally non-directive, without being prepared to raise issues of inequality and oppression, end up by reinforcing the status quo (ibid, p. 72).

However, even in a non-directive setting, workers have an obligation to challenge discrimination and oppression, and it was in this climate of challenging not only the status quo but also discriminatory attitudes and practices that the philosophy behind social action emerged.

'Social action' is a cyclical process of groups of people coming together to discuss and identify problems of concern, collectively acting to solve those problems,

reflecting back on that process and then identifying new areas of concern. It takes the issues, ideas and understanding of people within communities as its central tenet and emphasises the facilitation by professionals of a process of learning, development and change. However, the aim is that young people are the driving force behind collective action to influence change and that facilitation is directly from agency workers to young people, rather than adopting a more multi-faceted approach to inter- party communication.

Williamson (1995) defines social action as having a two-fold objective:

> *...to enable young people to learn about the collective nature of their condition and to support young people in taking collective action to address it (p. 5).*

Professional proponents of self-directed social action groupwork have been increasingly concerned to foster the political power of group action in a 'bottom-up' approach to tackling inequality in society. In 1972, Freire suggested that the only way the oppressed in our society could be empowered is through what he termed 'conscientization' - firstly becoming critically aware of the political and economic power imbalance in society and secondly seeking to address the causes as public rather than private issues.

More recently, Mullender and Ward (1991) also criticised a more orthodox concept of empowerment as being merely enabling, and recommended instead that it include an active challenge to the status quo, a status quo which exacerbates oppression and disaffection amongst minority groups. These authors describe the stages in their social action model of 'self-directed groupwork' as firstly, workers coming together and agreeing ground rules and definitions in relation to empowerment. Secondly, the workers engage, in an 'open planning' way, with potential participants, and help them to set the norms, define and analyse the problems and set the goals. Thirdly, the group is helped by the workers to explore what the problems are to be tackled, why those problems exist and how to produce change through collective action. Fourthly, the group moves from recognition of the problems to taking action to address them. Fifthly, the group reviews its action, identifies new issues to tackle, and decides on further action to address the new issues. In this stage, the crux of social action is illustrated:

> *The group goes on to see the connections between WHAT, WHY, and HOW. In other words, participants extend their attention to broader issues and wider-scale campaigning. Meanwhile, the workers move increasingly into the background and may leave the group altogether. As well as 'taking over' the running of their group, participants are, by this stage, learning to take control of their own lives and of the way others perceive them. Their much improved self-esteem tells them that they have a right to do this (p. 19).*

Proponents of such textbook social action would emphasise that it is a process of politicisation of young people, especially disadvantaged or socially isolated young people. Social action workers are there to encourage this cycle of discussion, identification, action and reflection and they would argue that the process of politicisation is more important than personal outcomes in terms of the learning achieved by young people. However, it is argued here that to empower young people effectively requires workers to give motivation, encouragement and direction to them in order to address *their* issues of concern, however personal those may be, and that this should be done not only in partnership with those holding greater power and but also towards mutually agreed goals.

Freire, Mullender and Ward and others argue that the will and motivation to influence change should come from the oppressed rather than from those holding power in society and that social action workers should facilitate group members to decide what, why and how they act to combat such oppression. The key to social action is described by Williamson (1995):

> *Only through injecting the 'why' question did the* ***structural*** *explanations for the predicaments of young people become more apparent to them, thereby sidelining the tendencies towards individual explanations and blame (p. 5).*

Participation and Empowerment

The process of empowerment is better understood, both in terms of theory and practice, when set alongside the process of 'citizen participation', a term conceptualised in the late 1960s in the field of planning (Arnstein, 1969 see Fig. 1). Participation tends to be defined as a basic right of individuals. As a process, it develops self-esteem and teaches people new skills of negotiation and awareness. Equally, participation can be seen as a means to an end, allowing people to have a greater ownership of decisions relating to social policy, which in turn will be more responsive to, and more congruent with, people's needs. Arnstein's model of participation could be seen as a precursor to the development of social action. She defines participation as:

> *... the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future.... In short, it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of an affluent society (p. 216).*

However, whilst social action was primarily developed to concentrate on the *process* of action, Arnstein's perception of participation focuses more on the *outcome*. But both models have their drawbacks. Arnstein has been criticised for infering that the amount of power within society is fixed and finite, and for ignoring the need for some element of expertise in decision-making. She also assumes that the existing political and economic structures can accommodate such increased citizen participation without fundamental change to the current balance of power.

Figure 1 : A Ladder of Participation (Arnstein, 1969)	
CITIZEN CONTROL	Degrees of Citizen Power
DELEGATED POWER	
PARTNERSHIPS	
PLACATION	Degrees of Tokenism
CONSULTATION	
INFORMING	
THERAPY	Non-participation
MANIPULATION	

But as Crouch (1977) remarks:

> *Once the masses are admitted to the political system it cannot be assumed that established interests will simply sit aside while radicals organise against them (p. 5).*

Social action could also be argued to fail to tackle fully the need for more fundamental structural change to the status quo. It is argued here that such change would require an element of expertise and authority in decision-making and negotiation coupled with a partnership approach with young people, since young people, from a position of marginalisation and disadvantage, cannot effectively achieve change on their own. It could be argued that the philosophy behind social action, like community work and citizen participation, could not only attract a more upwardly-mobile, eloquent section of the population who are not currently deemed 'disempowered', but also promote action that inadvertantly gives more legitimacy to, rather than questions, the existing social order:

> *Participation within a particular political system is an affirmation of identity with it and acceptance of its mandate (Crouch, 1977).*

The problem with both social action and participation is that there may be inherent scepticism amongst those currently without power, skills and resources that change could ever be effected from the grass roots. The War on Poverty and the Community Action Program of the 1960s in the United States illustrate this point. They encouraged the full participation of the poor in local communities, but the poor lacked the skills, contacts and financial resources required to initiate change. In effect, they were being asked to 'pull themselves up by their own bootstraps' (Coit, 1978, p. 298). Nevertheless, Coit goes on to argue that social action at a local 'bottom-up' level will be more effective than participation from a more global, 'top-down' level, as such community action will be independent of the state and therefore more likely to influence social change. However, it is argued here that bottom-up approaches to reversing power imbalances, which are developed possibly without the cooperation and partnership of those currently holding power, could well prove to be fruitless, and result in subsequent feelings of helplessness, apathy and eventual abandonment of aspirations.

People often do not want to participate in, or cannot see the value in, collective action towards social change. Kasperson & Breitbart (1974) recognise this problem in respect of Americans when they state that local participation in politics is low, either as a result of contentment with the status quo or apathy - or, as Friere (1972) suggests, fear: fear of change, freedom or responsibility. Hence there is a need to encourage partnership between those with the skills, power and knowledge and those most affected by a lack of change:

> *The need for **support** arises not because people lack the competence to participate in society, but because people's participation is undermined by or not part of the dominant culture or tradition (Croft and Beresford, 1994, p. 61).*

Early liberal or Marxist literature on participation and empowerment suggests that those marginalised from mainstream opportunities within society can only have control and influence over their lives through collective politicisation and a redistribution of power from the 'haves' to the 'have nots':

Participation simply becomes the struggle of those without power to take it from the elite (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974, p. 5).

However, this approach to empowerment assumes that power is a fixed commodity with zero sum qualities which, it is argued here, creates conflict rather than cooperation and denies the development of a partnership approach to problem-solving. Equally, such adversarial and divisive approaches to participation ignore the very real need for expertise, resources and authority required in the process of planning and decision-making. Grass roots struggles often founder because of a lack of knowledge, skills, finance or influence. Often, attempts at politicising minority groups in society fail to acknowledge their immediate day-to-day needs and fail to weigh up the costs incurred from taking on an adversarial role versus the benefits accrued from such action. Is it not possible that a more co-operative partnership model could be adopted in the process of empowering *all* interested parties to effect change - a partnership which acknowledges the uneven distribution of power, resources and skills, but where people work together to overcome the obstacles towards collective action? To demonstrate some of the pitfalls in adopting a textbook social action model of empowerment, an example is given below of a project set up by the writer in the early 1990s to work with disadvantaged 15-18 year olds (see Barry, 1995 for a fuller description of the operation of the project).

The Social Action Project

The Social Action Project began in 1991 with funding from Save the Children Fund, to develop and run groups for young people with a common interest in bringing about change within their communities or within their lives more generally. The Project was based on the outskirts of Edinburgh on an estate which was renowned for high rates of crime, unemployment, poverty and poor housing. Part of the problem with such estates is that there is often nothing constructive for young people to do, both on a day-to-day basis and with their lives generally. In the short- term there are few recreational facilities which are accessible or appeal to young people, they often lack the financial, emotional and social resources to fight the ensuing boredom, and as a result may become involved in offending or other deviant behaviour. In the long-term there are few employment or training opportunities which can help them to gain recognition or status within the wider society and they often have neither the skills nor support necessary to tackle these problems. Such problems are most acute for the 15 to 18 age group who are leaving childhood, school and family in search of adulthood, employment and independence.

The specific aims of the Social Action Project were to support young people in gaining greater control, responsibility and self-confidence and the specific group to which this article refers focused attention on the needs of 15-18 year olds, especially those involved in the care and justice systems. Whilst the general philosophy behind social action groupwork was discussed with potential group members, there was an additional agency aim within this particular group to influence social workers, the judiciary and lawyers to retain 16 and 17 year olds within the welfare-oriented Children's Hearing System (CHS) as it was felt that if they entered the more punishment-oriented Criminal Justice System (CJS) at an age when often they may be 'growing out of crime' (Rutherford, 1986), then there was a likelihood that such a move might accelerate them into a career of crime. Unlike the English legislation pertaining to criminal justice matters, the CHS evolved as a result of the findings of the Kilbrandon Committee in 1964 and the subsequent Social Work (Scotland) Act of 1968 which allowed for

young people aged 16-18, who were charged in the adult courts, to be referred back to the CHS for voluntary or statutory supervision. The aim of the CHS was to deal with child offenders (in particular those under 16 but also 16 - 18s) on a welfare rather than punishment basis, on 'need' rather than 'deed'. The best interests of the child were stressed and juvenile justice was administered by a trained lay tribunal in an informal, child-centred setting. Serious offences could, however, be dealt with through the adult courts. The CHS offers support through supervision to young people up to the age of 18 but they tend to have such orders terminated at 16 because of a lack of social work and financial resources geared up to meeting the needs of this older age group. In 1994, for example, only five per cent of 16 and 17 year olds were remitted back to the CHS by the Procurators Fiscal in Scotland (Scottish Office, 1995). The likelihood of this age group being remitted back to the CHS is also reduced by the fact that legal aid is currently not available to young people for legal representation at Children's Hearings. Needless to say, once persistent young offenders enter the CJS, they are often more likely to accelerate prematurely towards a custodial sentence and a possible criminal career.

Save the Children Fund hoped that young people would, through the Social Action group, help influence such referrals back to the CHS by requesting this of their representatives in court (i.e., social workers and lawyers) and that such a move on the part of young people might encourage greater use of the above-mentioned legislation. This aim - which was shared with group members from the outset (and with which they initially concurred) - proved less achievable than expected when young people themselves were being asked to instigate such change, and when the current practice of *not* referring this age group back to the CHS was so entrenched. Also young people often decided when the time came that they did not want to be referred back to the CHS, preferring rather to take the risk of being dealt with more rapidly through the adult courts (i.e. being given a fine or a month's imprisonment was often preferable to a year's CHS supervision by a social worker). Equally, change could not be brought about in the legislation without the active involvement of the judiciary, social workers and lawyers, but given the remit of the Project to leave the impetus to influence change predominantly in the hands of the young people themselves, the Project staff did not initiate or formalise such involvement of the relevant agencies, thus not preparing the latter for possible approaches by young people. In retrospect, Save the Children Fund should have taken a more proactive role in consulting with those parties to gain their understanding and co-operation. What would have been fruitful, on reflection, was a collaborative approach, initiated jointly by the various professions and the relevant young people. Such a forum, comprising young people, reporters to the CHS, sheriffs, Procurators Fiscal, police, social workers and lawyers - and possibly facilitated by the social action workers - could have been better placed to discuss the issues and to identify a constructive way forward.

However, it also transpired during the course of the project that the young people's agendas were often far removed from those of the workers. The group members' aims were predominantly short-term and small-scale, not altogether surprising given their preoccupation with day-to-day living and their pessimism about an improvement in their general situation. If the group wanted to influence change at all - and some members categorically did not - their hopes were for more recreational facilities, opportunities for day trips away from the area in which they lived, less harassment (as they saw it) from the police and constructive help with finding a job. They wanted

the support and active involvement of workers and responded more instinctively to being part of a team (alongside professional input) rather than acting as a group on their own. There is often no-one else that young people can turn to for support, other than professional workers with whom they may have built up a rapport based on trust.

The group members had several criticisms of groupwork methods which emphasised the 'bottom- up' social action approach. These were that they were too inexperienced to organise things for themselves and wanted a more directive role from workers; that at 15-17 they felt they were too young to be thinking seriously about more global issues and tended to want to 'live for the moment'; that 'sitting around discussing things' was too much to ask of such an active age group, and that they felt uncomfortable with an agenda which they had not initiated, did not necessarily understand and often did not wholeheartedly support. By that, they referred to the more purist social action method of facilitation from a distance rather than hands-on collaboration of the workers with the group members. They felt that, without actively collaborating with people who had greater influence and knowledge than they had (both in terms of the workers and those agencies they wished to engage with), they would not achieve change and this would lead to disaffection and further apathy. They also felt that young people arguing their case alone were less likely to be listened to and that such an approach might be seen as adversarial and confrontational by those in power. It is interesting that this feeling of helplessness was also reflected in calls received by Childline Scotland, where young people often referred to clashes with authority over aims/methods of intervention, a lack of privacy or confidentiality in consulting professional workers and a feeling of not being taken seriously (CRDU, 1994).

Discussion and Conclusions

There are two key issues to emerge from this example, one in relation to the scale of change that young people may want to effect, and the second in relation to whether encouraging young people to take on an adversarial role single-handed is as 'empowering' in the long run as is a partnership based on co-operation.

In relation to the first issue, most social action proponents would argue that the macro-issues (say, of the changes to benefits for 16 and 17 year olds) require more attention within social action groupwork than the micro-issues (say, of the lack of recreational facilities within a housing estate). However, when people are fighting to survive day-to-day deprivation, they are unlikely to place their own needs below those of society as a whole: individual need inevitably requires to be addressed before collective need, and personal need before political need. Ideally, social action should be about political change, change brought about by the determination and dynamism of young people as a group force. However, the reality in an area like the housing estate cited above is that - ironically - young people are often too ground down by poverty, unemployment and social isolation to be overly-concerned about political change. Admittedly, they need to see that their situation is often as a result of the wider political and social structure, but the dilemma lies in the fact that unless they get their own house in order first, the motivation and impetus for wider change is unlikely to be a priority for them.

In relation to the issue of confrontation versus co-operation, as was apparent from this project, young people are no different from other age groups in that they want to be part not only of their own community but also of the wider society. The covert agenda of agencies promoting social action at a grass-roots level maybe

misses this point. This article argues that many young people, already isolated by disadvantage, are more likely to respond to cooperative partnership rather than taking action single-handedly in what may be seen by others as an adversarial fashion.

A partnership has the potential to be both participatory and empowering. Not only does social action require partnership between young people and professionals but it also requires a more realistic agenda - the micro issues important to young people rather than the macro issues important to the professional facilitators. If social action is seriously to involve young people in a participative manner, then such action must be based primarily on young people's agenda, and include their needs and desires as an equal consideration. All too often, as Gore (1993) warns, in seeking to empower others, workers may inadvertantly or otherwise use their authority and thereby exercise social control. Long and Long (1992) equally argue that the term 'empowerment' has connotations of 'an "injection of power" from outside aimed at changing the balance of forces... "powerful outsiders" helping "powerless insiders"' (p. 275).

However, young people on the whole do not want to 'go it alone'. Often paralysed into inaction by disadvantage and despair, many young people desperately seek the direction, authority, love, attention or encouragement of others whom they can trust in order to address the problems they face in their own backyards. It is difficult for young people to 'fight' a system of which they may want to be a part, but from which as yet they may feel totally excluded. The problem with empowerment without participation is that young people may find it difficult, and conceivably too confrontational, to criticise a social system in which they are not currently actively involved. They first need to join that social system (through participation within it) before adopting the possibly adversarial role encouraged by proponents of social action. Only then, as members of that society, are young people likely to share the power needed to influence change, in collaboration with other, more well-established members.

As Mungham (1982) points out:

> *...in so far as youth raises its voice at all, the cry is for jobs, for incorporation; their concern is not to subvert a social order, but to join it (p. 38).*

Being led from behind may give young people the transitory feeling of participation, but they are unlikely to feel empowered by such a process. Without the goodwill, cooperation, openness and collaboration of others who can give them that trust and recognition as *partners,* then regrettably the powerful voice of young people may well remain unheard.

Monica Barry *is based at the Social Work Research Centre, Stirling University.*

References

Arnstein, S. (1969) 'A Ladder of Citizen Participation' in *Journal of the American Institute of Planners,* 35, 4, pp. 215-224.

Barry, M. (1995) 'Young People in the Care/Justice System in Scotland', in Williamson, H (Ed), *Social Action for Young People,* Lyme Regis, Russell House Publishing.

Bowes, A.M. (1996) 'Evaluating an Empowering Research Strategy: Reflections on Action- Research with South Asian Women', in *Sociological Research Online,* Vol. 1, No. 1, <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/socresonline/1/1/1.html>

Burke, E.M. (1968) 'Citizen Participation Strategies', in *Journal of the American Institute of Planners,* vol. 34, pp. 287-294.

Children's Rights Development Unit (1994) *Scottish Agenda for Children,* CRDU.

Coit, K. (1978) 'Local Action, not Citizen Participation', in Tabb, W.K. & Sawers, L. (Eds), *Marxism and the Metropolis: New Perspectives in Urban Political Economy,* New York, Oxford University Press.

Conger, J. (1989) 'Leadership: the art of empowering others', in *The Academy of Management Executive*, vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 17-24.

Convery, P. & Chatrik, B. (1995) 'Unemployment Worsens for 16 & 17 year olds' in *Working Brief*, 69, November, London, Unemployment Unit, pp. 10-11.

Croft, S. & Beresford, P. (1994) 'A Participatory Approach to Social Work', in Hanvey, C. & Philpot, T., *Practising Social Work*, London, Routledge.

Crouch, C. (1977) 'The Place of Participation in the Study of Politics' in Crouch, C (Ed) *Participation in Politics*, London, Croom Helm.

Franklin, B. (1986) *The Rights of Children*, Oxford, Blackwell.

Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Gore, J. (1993) *The Struggle for Pedagogies*, New York, Routledge.

Habermas, J. (1977) 'Hannah Arendt's communications concept of power', in *Social Research*, vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 3-24.

Hallett, C. (1984) *Participation in Personal Welfare Services*, Working Papers and Research from the Welfare and Community Services Review, Western Australia.

Hugman, R. (1991) *Power in Caring Professions*, Basingstoke, Macmillan.

Kasperson, R.E. & Breitbart, M. (1974) 'Participation, Decentralization and Advocacy Planning', Commission on College Geography, Resource Paper No. 25, Association of American Geographers, Washington, DC.

Kreisberg, S. (1992) *Transforming Power*, New York, New York State University.

Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*, London, MacMillan.

Mayo, M. (1994) 'Community Work', in Hanvey, C. & Philpot, T., *Practising Social Work*, London, Routledge.

Morley, L. (1995) 'Empowerment and the New Right' in *Youth & Policy*, No. 51, pp. 1-10.

Mullender, A. & Ward, D. (1991) *Self-Directed Groupwork: Users take action for empowerment*, London, Whiting & Birch.

Mungham, G. (1982) 'Workless Youth as a Moral Panic', in Rees, T. & Atkinson, P. (Eds), *Youth Unemployment and State Intervention*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Rutherford, A. (1986) *Growing Out of Crime*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Scottish Office (1995) *Statistical Bulletin*, SWK CH1995/19, December.

Ward, C. (1995) 'Wreckers' Paradise' in *New Statesman & Society*, 15/29 December, pp. 30-31.

Williamson, H. (1993) 'Youth Policy in the United Kingdom and the Marginalisation of Young People', in *Youth and Policy*, No. 40, pp. 33-48.

Williamson, H. (Ed) (1995) *Social Action for Young People*, Lyme Regis, Russell House Publishing.

YOUTH WORK, INFORMAL EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONALISATION:

The issues in the 1990s

SARAH BANKS

The debate about whether youth work is, ever could be, or should be a profession is one that has emerged on various occasions in the past (Holmes, 1981; Davies, 1988). It is now surfacing again in the context of the increasing fragmentation of the occupation, changes in education and training in youth and community work and the possibility of developing National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). How the question about youth work as a profession is answered depends upon both how 'profession' is defined and views about the nature and purpose of youth work. This article will explore what is meant by 'professionalisation', and in particular the role of a professional association and a code of ethics. It is argued that neither the traditional professional model nor the 'technical' NVQ approach adequately characterise the role of the youth work practitioner. Recent proposals for a broader occupational grouping including youth work, community work, adult education and play work could offer a more fruitful avenue for the development of an occupational identity based around the core process and values of informal education.

Is youth work a profession?

If a profession is defined according to the 'trait' theory, then arguably youth work could not be regarded as a profession. The 'trait' theory of professionalism is based on the premise that in order for an occupational group to be regarded as having professional status, it must possess certain key characteristics. Koehn (1994, p. 56) lists five frequently cited traits of professionals as follows:

1 they are licensed by the state to perform a certain act.

2 they belong to an organisation of similarly enfranchised agents who promulgate standards and/or ideals of behaviour and who discipline one another for breaching these standards.

3 they possess so-called 'esoteric' knowledge or skills not shared by other members of the community.

4 they exercise autonomy over their work, which is work that is not well-understood by the wider community.

5 they publicly pledge themselves to render assistance to those in need and as a consequence have special responsibilities or duties not incumbent upon others who have not made this pledge.

Few, if any, of these characteristics apply to youth work. Youth workers are certainly not licensed by the state. There is no register of qualified youth workers and many people who are called 'youth workers' possess no qualifications. Indeed, the 'youth service' is staffed by a large proportion of volunteers and part-time workers. There is no single organisation which serves the role of a professional association for youth workers. The National Association of Youth and Community Education Officers covers those in senior and managerial positions. What was formerly the Community and Youth Service Association became the Community and Youth Workers Union and

performs the functions of a trade union rather than a professional association. The extent to which youth workers possess 'esoteric' knowledge is debatable. Some might argue that those who have undergone two year education and training programmes in higher education do possess particular knowledge and skills relating to their roles as facilitators, enablers and communicators. However, the aim of practice is to share this knowledge and skills, not to retain them as 'esoteric'. The extent to which 'autonomy' is exercised is also debatable. Some would argue that the work in local authority or large voluntary organisations is bound by bureaucratic rules and procedures and therefore the autonomy of the individual worker is limited. Yet, compared to other 'professions' operating in bureaucracies (such as social workers or teachers) it could be argued that youth workers often exercise considerable freedom over their day to day practice. Finally, what Koehn terms the 'public pledge' is often in the form of a code of ethics, which new entrants to a profession pledge to uphold. There is no such concept of a public pledge for youth work. Indeed, the idea of the practitioner 'rendering assistance to those in need', what might be called 'the service ideal', fits less well with the overall purpose of youth work than it does with that of law, medicine, social work or nursing.

The reasons listed above have often been cited as to why youth work is not a profession. However, they can also be used to argue that other occupational groups in the 'welfare' field such as social work or nursing are not professions, or at least not 'full' professions with the same status as law or medicine, for example. Yet this has not prevented these occupational groups from working towards professionalisation, with the development of professional associations, codes of ethics and systems for regulating misconduct. Social work has been less successful than nursing in that it still does not have a register of qualified practitioners or a General Council which would strike off practitioners in cases of misconduct. Some have argued that although youth work is not yet a profession, it should aspire to become one, and the establishment of a single professional body and a code of ethics would be a significant move in this direction. However, it is important to look at whether this concept of 'profession' makes sense in itself, before we consider whether it is appropriate for youth work to strive towards achieving some of these traits.

There has been considerable criticism of the 'trait theory' of professionalism (see, for example, Johnson, 1972; Abbott and Wallace, 1990; Hugman, 1991; Koehn, 1994). First, there is no agreement over precisely what the essential traits of professionalism are. Some commentators speak more broadly of 'community sanction' for the authority of the professional group rather than state licensing. Similarly, some talk of a basis of 'systematic theory' as opposed to esoteric knowledge (Greenwood, 1957), and others add additional criteria such as professional education and qualification (Millerson, 1964). According to Koehn (1994) the most defensible trait of professionalism is the public pledge that professionals make to render assistance to those in need. She argues that the other traits are neither necessary nor sufficient to define a professional.

Another criticism of the trait theory is that it is modelled on the old-established male-dominated professions such as medicine and the law. Newer occupational groups, such as social work, nursing, teaching are then automatically regarded as only 'semi-professions' since they lack certain characteristics, such as autonomy over work, or a systematic knowledge base. Interestingly, the 'caring' professions tend to be staffed by a much higher proportion of women and this has been cited as a reason for under-valuing the work (Hugman, 1991; Abbott and Wallace,

1990). Some have argued that an alternative set of traits is needed for the 'people work' professionals which takes into account their location in bureaucratic settings and their 'affective knowledge based on intuitive interpersonal understanding' (Holmes, 1981, p. 27). However, this would perpetuate the trait model of professionalism which lacks usefulness in developing our understanding of the nature and role of professions in society. As Johnson points out, professions have developed in a variety of ways depending upon historical and cultural factors and variations in the role of governments and academic institutions (1972, p. 29). There is no one set of traits that uniquely characterises a profession, nor one set of stages which an occupational group passes through to reach this end point of 'professionalism'.

Johnson, and others following him (Wilding, 1982; Hugman, 1991) focus instead on power as a factor in the success of an occupation in achieving status in society and see professionalism as a peculiar type of occupational control whereby a community of practitioners defines the relationship between professional and client. Hugman argues that the language of professionalism often obscures the issue of power. Talk of the service ideal, trustworthiness, expertise, colleague control and public accountability appeal to the sentiments embodied in the trait approach, but can be interpreted as 'occupational bids for status and privilege' (Hugman, 1991, p. 6). On this analysis, it would be more useful to explore why attempts are being made to professionalise youth work and on what grounds, rather than whether it could be regarded as a profession in the terms delineated by the trait theory. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that, although discredited, trait theory is still influential in that occupations continue to make claims to certain attributes in order to affirm their professional status. Professionalism can also be regarded as an ideology not restricted to groups that have undergone professionalisation (Johnson, 1972, p. 59):

> *professionalism has become an occupational ideal in a society in which its attainment becomes less and less likely as more and more work is routinized through technological advances and occupational practice increasingly finds its typical setting within bureaucratic organizations of various kinds. (Johnson, 1984, p. 19)*

Should youth work seek to become a profession? - the issues in the 1970s

If we accept the power-based analysis of professionalism as described above, the argument against the professionalisation of youth work has generally been based on the premise that professions tend to be elitist and exclusive groups. They make claim to special or 'esoteric' knowledge gained through lengthy periods of qualifying education. They therefore exclude from full professional status those who are unable to gain the qualifications. They also create a distance between the expert professional and the users of services and may even disempower service users from defining and resolving their own problems. There has been considerable criticism of the self-interested and disabling role of professionals in general, and in particular, the welfare professionals (Illich et al., 1977; Wilding, 1982) . Therefore, for ideological reasons many youth workers have resisted attempts to professionalise youth work. They have seen the role of youth worker often as an ally of the young people and communities with which they work. To move towards professionalisation would be to sacrifice the key values of youth work, which are about treating the participants as far as possible as equals and working alongside young people and local communities in their struggles to obtain better resources, to counteract oppression and gain power for themselves.

The anti-professional trend was particularly strong in the field of community work, which became more strongly linked with youth work after the Fairbairn-Milson Report (DES, 1969). In the mid to late 1970s there was a push for the professionalisation of youth work from some practitioners and academics with several proposals being put forward for codes of ethics (see, for example, Brunel University, 1978). Social work had introduced its code of ethics in 1975 and many felt that youth work should follow the same route. This was thought to be important because of the high degree of responsibility inherent in the role of youth worker:

> *The importance of the Youth Service's work with young people, and the responsibilities for their welfare and safeguard, calls for one of the highest levels of professional conduct and integrity of any of the professions. It is for this reason that a professional code of conduct should be explicated and internalised by members of the profession. (Brunel University, 1978, p. 2)*

Davies (1988) saw the debate in the mid-1970s as one between professionalism and trade unionism, and the latter won the argument. According to Davies (p. 201), most workers are employees with limited control over their work situations 'who must therefore combine as trade unionists if they are to combat the power and conflicting interests of their employers'. This approach enabled workers to continue to see themselves as allies of the young people and communities with which they worked and to try to avoid the distance they felt would be created if youth work professionalised. During the mid-1970s to mid-1980s the occupation seemed fairly stable and even expanding. Many new education and training courses were established in higher education institutions and the occupation felt relatively secure, regardless of the fact that it had no professional association or code of ethics.

The arguments in the 1990s

What has brought the question of professionalisation back on the agenda again? Recent articles in Youth and Policy have drawn attention to the fragmentation of the occupation of 'youth work', its increasing social control functions and the lack of a shared perception of the aims and values of the work between workers and users (Tucker, 1994; Jeffs and Smith, 1994; Love and Hendry, 1994). It is partly for these reasons that there is talk in some quarters of the need for a 'professional association' to unify the occupational group, to state clearly the values and principles of the work and to protect the very existence of the work in a climate of budget cuts and restructuring of local authorities. Youth work has always taken place in a range of settings (for example, voluntary and statutory) with a variety of purposes (education, care and control) with a mixture of qualified and unqualified workers. Its link with community work, which became formalised in the 1970s, has always been uneasy, with some seeing youth work as a part of community work, and others seeing it as separate and distinct. However, in recent years the local authority youth services, or youth and community services, have begun to disintegrate, with the work being relocated in Leisure Departments, Community Services Departments or, indeed, contracted out to independent voluntary groups. Increasingly, youth workers are being employed by agencies concerned with specialist functions such as health education, crime prevention or drug abuse. The agendas that youth workers are working to may be increasingly those of local or central government in relation to 'Safer Cities' or 'City Challenge', for example, rather than those of the local people themselves. Jeffs and Smith (1994) speak of the 'new authoritarianism' which is emerging as youth workers increasingly take on social control

functions with young people. None of these trends is completely new, but they are intensifying the fragmentation of the occupation and challenging its values.

Another impetus for the establishment of a professional association comes from changes in education and training. There has been a rapid expansion in the number of institutions offering qualifications in youth and community work over the last decade (see Jeffs and Smith, 1993). Whilst the qualification for full-time work can still be gained after the equivalent of two years full-time study, the majority of higher education institutions are also offering the possiblity of an additional year's study for a BA. The result of this inevitably will be to raise the academic level of the qualification. It also means that there are now many higher education institutions with a vested interest in maintaining and enhancing the credibility of the qualification and of an occupational group for which the qualification is relevant. At the same time there has been a development of a variety of routes to qualification outside higher education - both employer-based training and the accreditation of prior learning. The introduction of competency-based training and National Vocational Qualifications in youth and community work has been hanging over the occupation and much debated for several years (Banks 1991; Davies and Durkin 1991; Hand 1993; Davies and Norton 1996). The development of competence-based training at higher education level seems to threaten developing notions of professional education with a stress on technical skill (Hodkinson and Issitt, 1994). The NVQ process entails the development of national occupational standards based upon an analysis of the functions a worker is required to perform in a job. Complex tasks are broken down into discrete and decontextualised elements, which inevitably fail to capture the concept of the whole practitioner - someone who is trustworthy, flexible, critical and able to use 'professional discretion' and judgement in a range of complex and differing situations. As Blackman and Evans (1993/4, p. 8) argue, the NVQ view of the world of work rests on an out-dated functionalism and psychological behaviourism which fail to capture the complexities of work performance and lack 'an understanding of the social-meaning and social relations of work'. Dominelli (1996, p. 163) comments, in relation to social work:

> *Competencies represent the Taylorisation of professional tasks, that is, their reduction to discrete elements which can be undertaken by less highly qualified individuals lower in the labour hierarchy at lower rates of pay. This marks the proletarianisation of professional work....*

A professional association with a clear vision of the boundaries of the occupational group, the goals and values upon which it is based and a broad representation from educationalists, practitioners and employers might provide a counter-balance to what are seen as narrow functionalist approaches to education and training.

A related issue is the endorsement of qualifications in youth and community work. In 1983 the establishment of the Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work strengthened the credibility of the qualification. Although previously training courses had been recognised by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Work as giving national qualifications, the establishment of a body which would develop national standards and quality control procedures along similar lines to the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work was seen as a big step forward. However, this optimism was shortlived, as the role became absorbed within the National Youth Agency (NYA) in 1990. It is threatened with further mar-

ginalisation as the status of the NYA as a Non Departmental Public Body directly funded by the Department for Education and Employment ceased in April 1996. The funding for the endorsement of education and training will come from the contribution made to the work of the NYA by local education authorities. It could be argued that a professional association representing the interests of all those working in the broad field of youth and community work may be needed to provide a counter-balance to the influence of the employers in the new endorsement process.

Whilst the Community and Youth Workers' Union has made valiant defences against fragmentation, job cuts and the introduction of NVQs, it represents only a proportion of those working in the field. A professional association with membership from employers, academics and practitioners might have a broader vision and stronger voice.

Beyond professionalisation: the current context

The question remains as to whether it is possible to create such a professional association in the present climate. The very reasons why some argue it is necessary (fragmentation and increasing control over the work by central and local government) also militate against its establishment. Tucker's (1994) research with 116 full-time qualified youth and community workers found over 35% of respondents apparently unable to characterise the professional identity of the youth and community worker. Some level of occupational identity is surely needed in order to form a professional association with its members subscribing to a common set of shared values?

Nevertheless, it could be argued that there has been an increasing clarity about the purpose and principles of youth and community work following the series of Ministerial Conferences in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The statement of principle finally agreed by these conferences, although never endorsed by central government, has served to clarify the 'value base' of youth and community work and is increasingly appearing in mission statements and in the curriculum of professional training programmes. These principles are: informal education; equality of opportunity; participation; empowerment. Whilst a lot of work is needed to refine and develop these principles, they are at least a starting point. An increasing clarity about the role of youth and community workers as informal educators is being developed through influential literature which is permeating the education and training programmes (for example, Smith, 1988; 1994; Jeffs and Smith (eds), 1990). This does provide a foundation for developing an occupational identity.

It may be a mistake to use the term 'professional' at all. For not only does the term have the elitist connotations so objected to in the 1970s, but it also refers to a model of an occupational purpose and identity (based on the traditional professions) which does not fit youth work. Above all, it does not seem to be a relevant concept in the 1990s for any occupational group. For there is a general climate of deprofessionalisation (increasing external regulation and control over the work of professionals); fragmentation (purchaser-provider splits, specialisation); inter-professional working (multi-disciplinary teams where the focus should be on shared values) and consumer-orientation (a focus on the specific needs and values of service users as opposed to professional values). These trends are increasingly being labelled as 'postmodern' - a contested concept often used to refer to the realisation that there are no universal truths, that the search for certainty is misguided and that we are living in times where fragmentation, individualism and uncertainty prevail (Harvey, 1990; Jameson 1991. For an analysis of youth work

training in postmodernist terms see Rosie, 1996; for a more detailed discussion of fragmentation and de-professionalisation in the context of social work see Banks 1996; Dominelli, 1996).

It may be tempting to accept the 'postmodern condition' because it reflects how youth work has always been - fragmented, lacking a unifying theory, body of knowledge or common purpose. Yet this is too easy. It gives permission for practitioners, educators and employers to relax into the individualities of practice and the particularities of one-off short-term projects, perpetuating the charge of anti-intellectualism so often levelled at youth work. Pountain (1994) criticises community education for a similar complacency and anti-intellectualism. However, if we really believe that the work is premised on notions of collective identity (of the young people and communities with which youth workers work), common purpose and structural change, then the workers should be able to build collective structures for themselves as practitioners, whilst also acknowledging difference, diversity and conflict. It may be that a less exclusive, broader occupational grouping is what is needed. Its purpose would be less about protecting the interests of its members and more about promoting critical dialogue about practice. As Aldridge (1996, p. 190) reminds us, professional associations are also about professional development as well as self-interest. She argues that the *British Medical Journal* (the publication of the British Medical Association) consists of the 'critical debate of new knowledge', which compares unfavourably with the social work (and one could equally say youth work) equivalent: 'a collection of ungrounded personal accounts, one-off research projects, or guides to legislation'. This is not to say that youth work should aspire to become like medicine. It is rather to emphasize that the functions of professional associations are many, and while a traditional professional association may not be possible or appropriate for youth work, some of the roles performed by a professional association are worth striving for.

Professional association or broader occupational group?

If a professional association were to be established for youth work, what would its functions be? The most important set of functions of a traditional professional association, such as the British Medical Association, is based around its operation as a community of peers, concerned to develop knowledge, enhance practice, support its members and to maintain the integrity and status of the profession. Membership is voluntary. A professional association gets established because there are people undertaking similar kinds of work who share something in common; but, once established, it also helps to create and maintain professional identity. In the well-established professions, other functions such as the monitoring and endorsing of professional education and the maintenance of a professional register of qualified practitioners, are performed by government funded bodies. So, for example, in nursing, the English National Board operates as an education and training standards body, whilst the U.K. Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting is the statutory regulatory body which maintains the register of qualified practitioners and will strike them off for professional misconduct. It is usually the professional association that is established first, which then works for statutory regulation and registration. In newly emerging professions, the voluntary professional associations may perform all these functions, in order to ensure that standards and credibility are developed and maintained. The British Association of Counselling is a good example of a professional association which also endorses qualifications, maintains a register of practitioners

and deals with complaints of misconduct. In the current political climate it is hardly likely that an occupational group such as counselling would be able to persuade central government to establish an endorsing body or General Council.

But is the model of the British Association of Counselling one that youth work could or should follow? Counselling is a much tighter occupational group with more clearly distinguishable knowledge and skills, which fits into the traditional model of one-to-one relationships with a client based on a notion of professional expertise and trust. Interestingly, proposals for a looser and broader occupational grouping embracing youth work have been considered recently. This would be based around the core theme of 'informal education' - which might include youth work, community work, adult education, and play work, for example. Proposals were made for a joint body to endorse professional qualifications, based on the notion that there are core values common to these groups (Russell and Jones, 1995). This idea emerged in the context of the changes in the National Youth Agency and the possibility that it would no longer be funded to carry out an endorsement function for youth and community work. As the NYA is now continuing in this role, and a proposed feasibility study has not been funded, it is unclear whether the ideas will be further developed. Proposals on this theme were clear that although the core values would be the starting point, each occupational sector would remain a discrete field in its own right.

To some extent this proposal built on earlier work by a group looking at the core elements of youth and community work (NYA, 1993) which had identified the values and processes of informal education as the core of both youth work and community work; practitioners then develop functional competence in particular settings, for example, working with young people, community arts, or adult education. Informal education is defined as a process, with workers seeking to:

- facilitate the learning of young people and adults
- respond to the expressed learning needs of individuals and groups
- identify the learning needs of individuals and groups
- engage in dialogue and problem posing with individuals and groups
- devise learning strategies to seek to meet needs of individuals and groups (NYA 1993, p.15)

Integral to this process, core values are identified as a commitment to:

- collective action
- autonomy of individuals and groups
- change and development
- justice and equality

While considerable work needs to be done to elucidate and develop these ideas, they offer a useful starting point. It may be easier to create an occupational identity based on the process of the work than it is to base it on a client group (such as young people) or an area of work (such as arts work). This is partly because many different occupations may work with the same client group (for example, youth justice workers, social care workers, teachers) and those working in a specialist area such as arts workers may be doing very different jobs with different purposes. The concept of informal education incorporates the key processes and values of youth work and is premised upon the fact that practitioners may work with a variety of client

groups in a variety of settings. It not only encapsulates what has been valued as the core process of youth work, but also allows for the fragmentation and specialisation that is currently happening in the world of work.

Indeed, the concept of 'community education' already exists in Scotland and in many local authorities in England as an attempt to bring together youth, community and adult education work - although the joining has not always been easy and the move to unitary authorities seems to be threatening this fragile framework. According to Mark Smith (personal communication) agreement concerning purpose in community education has been largely rhetorical and there has been a problem in the depth of understanding and commitment to education as the central animating aspect of the occupational identity. Martin (1996) warns against the genericism that has developed in Scotland, which has led, he argues, to a 'disabling confusion of purpose'. This is an important lesson to learn from the Scottish experience, where the original intention of the Alexander Report (SED, 1975) was for adult education and youth and community workers to work together as 'committed allies' with a 'common purpose'. Martin bemoans the shift from 'committed allies' to 'multi-purpose generic workers' - a move that has been exacerbated by the change to a competency-based system of higher education qualifications for community education.

In the majority of other European countries there are professions based around a notion of informal education variously called social pedagogues or special educators (Davies Jones, 1994). The configurations of settings and roles vary in different countries, and often they have grown up through an amalgamation of a number of originally small, separate occupational groups. For example, the current occupational group 'paedagog' in Denmark was formed in 1991 through an amalgamation of separate training programmes for educators in kindergartens, recreation centres, nurseries and institutions for people with disablities (Danish Ministry of Education, 1994). While much of this work incorporates what would be regarded as social work or social care work in Britain, what is interesting is that it is possible for a broad occupational group to exist which performs functions that are educational, caring and therapeutic in a variety of different settings.

At a time of increasing specialisation, fragmentation and disintegration of existing professional and occupational groups, it may be easier to build new and broader configurations than in a time of stability. For example, other types of work suggested as appropriate for inclusion under 'informal education' include community arts and health education (Russell and Jones, 1995). These are specialist areas developing in the more established fields of arts and health which may fit better with the core values and processes of informal education. The idea that it is important to distinguish the core values and processes from the work settings was emphasised by the NYA Working Group (1993). The proliferation of work settings need not be a stumbling block. Indeed, once we know what we are looking for, the commonalities may be easier to highlight where work is performed in different types of agency, with different types of participants, where workers have different job titles and a variety of functions. A loose occupational grouping based around the core values and processes of informal education which is committed to further exploration and analysis of this core, to reflecting on and developing practice, and to creating a critical community of practitioners and educators could take on the best of the functions of professional association in the context of a set of dynamic, interrelated and evolving fields of work.

Code of ethics or statement of values?

The other issue often raised in the quest for professionalisation is the need for a code of ethics. It could be argued that if the aim is to create and maintain an occupational identity, then a statement of values building on the list identified above, well-articulated and constantly debated, should be sufficient. Yet the lure of a code of ethics is also about the trappings of professionalism that it provides, which is partly what those so opposed to the professionalisation of the work in the 1970s wanted to avoid:

> *Codes of ethics are political counters constructed as much to serve as public evidence of professional intentions and ideals as to provide actual behavioural guidelines for practitioners. (Wilding, 1982, p. 77)*

Nevertheless, there is a strong feeling amongst some practitioners and students that a code of ethics might be useful in guiding practitioners about how to implement the values of the occupation in their practice settings.

It may be useful at this point to describe briefly what a code of ethics is (for a fuller discussion see Banks, 1995, pp. 67-93). A code of ethics usually lists the core values or ethical principles of a profession and also contains statements relating to professional trust and integrity, including the commitment of practitioners to ensure they have relevant and up-to-date skills, not to discriminate against users on grounds of race, sex, etc, and not to exploit or misuse the user or use their knowledge for inhumane purposes. In this sense, a code could be said to fulfil the function of the 'professional pledge' identified by Koehn as the hallmark of a profession. Yet some practitioners are actually seeking more detailed guidance about how to act in certain types of situations - for example, when to breach confidentiality, when to challenge the oppressive practices of an employer. However, this is to misunderstand the nature and purpose of a code of ethics, which cannot and should not be a detailed rulebook telling practitioners how to act in every possible type of situation they may encounter in their daily work. When the British Association of Social Workers first introduced its code of ethics, Rice (1975, p. 381) warned that to seek a particularity of rules and guidance would result in a 'substitute for ethical reflection, not a stimulation and illumination of it'. He commented:

> *A code of ethics creates the spirit and standard of ethical reflection in that community of ideals, skills and practical concern. A code, over-precise and detailed, would undervalue the professional community ... (ibid)*

It is important to distinguish between codes of ethics and codes of practice or conduct. The former tend to be statements of general principles, whilst the latter may give much more detailed guidance about how to act in particular circumstances or situations. The very brief code of ethics for counsellors, for example, is followed by a much more detailed code of practice. Some of the areas this covers are quite specific, for example, 'the client should not be observed by anyone other than their counsellor(s) without having given his/her informed consent'; 'when announcing counselling services, counsellors should limit information to name, relevant qualifications, address, telephone number, hours available and a brief listing of services offered' (BAC, 1992). If we began to develop that level of detail for the informal education field, then the variety of practice settings and roles of workers would soon become a stumbling block. It is more appropriate for individual agencies to have their own codes of practice and procedures relating to, say, confidentiality, disclosure of child abuse, than it is for a professional association to develop detailed guidance.

If there were to be a code of ethics for informal educational work, then it would probably consist of a statement of the core values, alongside some statements about professional integrity and trust. It would be less about guiding action, and more about confirming occupational identity and the integrity of the workers. It could be used to argue against unjust or oppressive practices in agencies, and, above all, it would be a part of creating the climate and spirit of ethical reflection in the community of practitioners. On this view of a code of ethics, it would be a means of stimulating dialogue and discussion about practice, rather than a tablet of stone prescribing right action. As Jackson (1994, p. 122) says, 'an unexamined code is not worth having'. Differences in interpretation are inevitable and therefore would need to be debated. Otherwise there would be a danger of a drift towards more prescriptive codes of practice which would be more about standardising behaviour than promoting ethical reflection (see Harris, 1994, for a discussion of the distinction between standardising and ethical clauses in codes of ethics). However, a code of ethics is not essential to achieve these aims. While it would offer a clear statement of values, articulated and debated in a critical occupational community, if we are to move beyond the old thinking about professions, maybe it is also time to move beyond the idea of codes of ethics (see Banks, 1996), whilst ensuring that the functions of a code that we want to see fulfilled are achieved.

Conclusions

The professional model has several attractions in the current climate. It could be seen as a way to maintain and create an occupational identity to counteract the fragmentation of job roles and settings. It could be a means of asserting public credibility and status to prevent the further marginalisation and 'proletarianisation' of youth work. Notions of 'professional judgement' and 'discretion' developed through critical reflection and education offer a more holistic view of practice in opposition to the mechanistic NVQ style work-based competencies. Yet we have to ask ourselves, is the organisation into professional groups defending other occupations in the current climate? Is professionalisation in the traditional sense consistent with the aims and values of youth work? And is professionalisation possible in the present circumstances of fragmentation? The answer to these questions seems to be 'no'. This leads to the conclusion that a broader occupational grouping based around the informal educational processes of the work may be a more workable and consistent approach. It must avoid what the NVQ project does (a mirror of so much of what is happening in public policy and welfare work) - a process of dismantling, fragmenting and analysis followed by the imposition of an overall, empty framework of 'national occupational standards'. The fragmentation dissipates any sense of commonality and solidarity amongst practitioners, while the imposition of the national framework replaces that solidarity with control.

A new occupational grouping based on the informal educational process would acknowledge fragmentation and difference, variety in settings and job roles. It would not seek to discover and impose a false unity or commonality of purpose and values, but rather to create a new set of values through discussion and dialogue in a dynamic community of practitioners. As Richard Rorty comments on the subject of solidarity in relation to the contingency of a postmodern world: 'solidarity is not discovered by reflection but created' (Rorty, 1989, p. xvi). The careful and creative work of Mark Smith (1994) in describing and making sense of the practice of workers in youth, community and adult education work as reflective practitioners engaging

with young people and communities in an informal educational process, offers us both the possibility and the inspiration to move forward. If we accept the importance of conversation and dialogue between practitioners and local people, then the development of a community of practitioners engaging in critical dialogue about the work is essential. Questions about the endorsement of qualifications and maintenance of standards of practice would inevitably follow, but we need to be wary of the elitism and exclusivity of the traditional professional model, and of the obsession with discrete and measurable competencies and bureaucratic proceduralisation of the NVQ model. The model of committed practitioner (working as an ally with a personal commitment to social change) is distinct from that of professional (an expert working with clients in a professionally defined role) and that of bureaucrat or technician (providing a service to consumers according to agency rules and procedures). The youth worker, as informal educator, is, in Mark Smith's words, an 'informed, committed' practitioner (Smith, 1994, p. 166). This must be our starting point.

***Sarah Banks** is Lecturer in Community and Youth Work at Durham University.*

Acknowledgements
The ideas for this paper developed as a result of discussion with colleagues at recent meetings of the Community and Youth Work Training Agencies Group (TAG). Discussion documents and debates facilitated by Mark Smith and John Holmes were particularly stimulating. I am especially grateful to Mark Smith, Robin Williams and to two anonymous referees for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

References

Abbott, P. and Wallace, C. (eds) (1990) *The Sociology of the Caring Professions,* London, Falmer Press.

Aldridge, M (1996) 'Dragged to Market: Being a Profession in the Postmodern World', *British Journal of Social Work,* no. 26, pp. 177-94.

Banks, S. (1990) 'Accrediting prior learning: implications for education and training in youth and community work', *Youth and Policy,* no.31, pp. 8-16

Banks, S. (1995) *Ethics and Values in Social Work,* Basingstoke, Macmillan.

Banks, S. (1996) 'Communities, Consumers and Codes: Ethical Issues in Social Work' in M. Parker (ed) *Ethics and Community: Proceedings of the 1995 Conference of the Centre for Professional Ethics,* Preston, Centre for Professional Ethics, University of Central Lancashire, pp. 118-128.

Blackman, S. and Evans, K. (1993/4) 'Comparative Youth Skill Acquisition in Germany and England: Training As A Process Not An Outcome', *Youth and Policy,* no. 43, pp. 1-23.

British Association for Counselling (1992) *Code of Ethics and Practice for Counselling,* Rugby, BAC.

British Association of Social Workers (1986) *Code of Ethics for Social Work,* Birmingham, BASW.

Brunel University (1976) *A Professional Code of Ethics for the Youth and Community Service: A Discussion Paper,* Brunel University Regional Training Consultative Unit (Youth Services).

Danish Ministry of Education (1994) *The Educator Training Programme,* Copenhagen, Ministry of Education.

Davies, B. (1988) 'Professionalism or Trade Unionism? The Search for a Collective Identity' in T. Jeffs and M. Smith (eds) *Welfare and Youth Work Practice,* Basingstoke, Macmillan.

Davies, B. and Durkin, M. (1991) '"Skill", "competence" and "competences" in Youth and Community Work', *Youth and Policy,* no. 34, pp. 1-11.

Davies, B. and Norton, R. (1996), 'Where are Competence-Based Approaches Leading Us: A Critical Response to McRoberts and Leitch', *Youth and Policy,* no. 53, pp. 44-52.

Davies Jones, H. (1994) 'The Social Pedagogues in Western Europe - some implications for European interprofessional care', *Journal of Interprofessional Care,* vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 19-29.

Department of Education and Science (1969) *Youth and Community Work in the 70s* (the Fairbairn-Milson Report), London, HMSO.

Dominelli, L. (1996) 'Deprofessionalising Social Work: Anti-Oppressive Practice, Competences and Postmodernism', *British Journal of Social Work,* no. 26, pp. 153-75.

Greenwood, E. (1957) 'Attributes of a Profession', *Social Work,* vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 44-55.

Hand, J. (1993) *NVQs and their implications for the youth service,* Leicester, Youth Work Press.

Harris, N. (1994) 'Professional codes and Kantian duties' in R. Chadwick (ed) *Ethics and the Professions,* Aldershot, Avebury, pp.104-115.

Harvey, D. (1990) *The Condition of Postmodernity,* Oxford, Blackwell.

Hodkinson, P. and Issitt, M. (1994) (eds) *The Challenge of Competence: Professionalism Through Vocational Education and Training,* London, Cassell.

Holmes, J. (1981) *Professionalisation - a misleading myth? a study of the careers of ex-students of youth and community work courses in England andWales from 1970 to 1978,* Leicester, National Youth Bureau.

Hugman, R. (1991) *Power in Caring Professions,* London, Macmillan.

Illich, I. et al. (1977) *The Disabling Professions,* London, Macmillan.

Jackson, J. (1994) 'Common codes: divergent practices' in R. Chadwick (ed) *Ethics and the Professions,* Aldershot, Avebury, pp. 116-124.

Jameson, F. (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,* London, Verso.

Jeffs, T. and Smith, M. (1990) (eds) *Using Informal Education. An Alternative to casework, teaching and control?,* Buckingham, Open University Press.

Jeffs, T and Smith, M. (1993) 'Getting the Job Done: Training for youth work - past, present and future', *Youth and Policy,* no. 40, pp. 10-32.

Jeffs, T. and Smith, M. (1994) 'Young People, Youth Work and the New Authoritarianism', *Youth and Policy,* 46, pp. 17-32.

Johnson, T. (1972) *Professions and Power,* London, Macmillan.

Johnson, T. (1984) 'Professionalism: Occupation or Ideology?' in S. Goodlad (ed) *Education for the professions: Quis Custodiet ...?,* Guildford, SRHE and NFER Nelson.

Koehn, D. (1994) *The Ground of Professional Ethics,* London, Routledge.

Love, J. and Hendry, L. (1994) 'Youth Workers and Young Participants: Two perspectives of youth work?', *Youth and Policy,* 46, pp. 43-54.

Martin, I (1996, forthcoming) 'Community Education: the Dialectics of Development' in R. Fieldhouse (ed), *A History of Modern British Adult Education,* Leicester, National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education.

Millerson, G. (1964) *The Qualifying Associations: A Study in Professionalisation,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

National Youth Agency (1993) *Report of the Working Group to Define the Distinctive Elements which form the Core of all Youth and Community Work Training,* Leicester, NYA.

Pountain, D. (1994) 'Anti-intellectualism, Postmodernism and Community Education', *Concept,* vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 4-11.

Rice, D. (1975) 'The Code: a voice for approval' *Social Work Today* 18th October pp. 381-2.

Rorty, R. (1989) *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Rosie, A. (1996) '"Pagan Knowledge": a case study of post-modern theorising and youth work training', *British Educational Research Journal,* vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 331-46.

Russell, W. and Jones, D. (1995) *Co-operation and Coherence in Endorsement of Qualifications: A Consultation Paper,* Westhill College, Birmingham, Endorsement of Informal Education Interim Officers Group.

Scottish Education Department (1975) *Adult Education: The Challenge of Change,* (Alexander Report), Edinburgh, HMSO.

Smith, M. (1988) *Developing Youth Work. Informal Education, Mutual Aid and Popular Practice,* Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

Smith, M. (1994) *Local Education. Community, conversation, praxis,* Buckingham, Open University Press.

Tucker, S. (1994) 'Changing Times, Changing Roles? An Examination of Contemporary Youth and Community Work Practice', *Youth and Policy,* no. 46, pp. 5-16.

Wilding, P. (1982) *Professional Power and Social Welfare,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

GENDERING THE YOUTH WORK CURRICULA IN AUSTRALIA:

A case study

JUDITH BESSANT and MEGAN EVANS

Introduction

In the context of a far-reaching Victoria government inquiry into the quality and direction of youth work education in a small, densely-populated state in south eastern Australia (Ministerial Review 1995), it is timely to consider the place of gender in the youth work curriculum. Over the past two decades there has been considerable public and policy interest in gender and curricula where it relates to the formal primary and secondary education of young people. Australia's Federal and state governments have instigated inquires into the role of gender in government and non-government schools. The subject has received substantial scholarly attention as many educators have reconsidered traditional cultural attitudes and gendered practices. However gender issues are still seen by some, perhaps many youth work educators as having little or no direct relevance to youth work education and practice. This way of thinking relates to popular assumptions that many of the issues and practices related to youth work training and young people are constrained by the identity marker, 'youth', which is said to be more important than other identity markers like gender, class, religious affiliation or ethnicity.

Although this article reviews youth work education in the state of Victoria some issues dealt with here undoubtedly will have parallels with the experiences of youth workers and youth work educators outside Australia. It is also anticipated that the article indicates some of the particularities of youth work education practices in Victoria. We deal with Victoria because it is not possible to generalise about 'Australia'. Australia is an extremely diverse country, not only geographically, but also in terms of its disparate socio-economic, political and cultural practices. Australia has a federal system of government with a national government and governments in each of the six states and two territories each with their own jurisdictions, education departments, and diverse sets of laws and practices. Historically this has meant the absence of single unified rail gauge system, different Summer-time zones on the east coast until 1996 and no national company legal structure.

For many readers of this journal, Australia may be a mythical place at 'the bottom' of the world and far from their own experiences, and the state of Victoria is possibly familiar to even fewer. Like the United States, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and South America, Australia is a region of recent 'European' settlement. It has bountiful natural resources, intensive patterns of urban development, (most of our 18 million people live in four or five big cities on the coastline), a rich material infrastructure, all the markers of an industrialised society, including a highly educated workforce, an array of institutions and cultural practices borrowed heavily from the 'motherland' (in this case 'Great Britain'), and significant numbers of indigenous peoples. The English influence has to date been particularly apparent in Victoria because of the appointment of United Kingdom expatriates into youth work education in the late 1970s and 1980s.

This article argues that the inclusion of 'gender' in youth work education is important for producing practitioners capable of relating well to young people. It argues that the inclusion of gender into the youth work curriculum (where curriculum is understood here as covering syllabus as well as pedagogic and assessment practices) is vital. It is

central to dealing effectively with the many gender-related issues young people will seek assistance about; for understanding and acting effectively when confronted with gender issues within the workplace affecting collegial relations and client-worker relations, such as discrimination; and finally for acting as effective, sensitive, critical and responsible role models to young men and women.

Youth work education in the Australian context

Australian youth workers are usually employed in either the public sector or in community agencies. Victorian local government has become a major employer, while youth workers are still found in the state's statutory child protection and adolescent support services. Youth refuges are another major employer of youth workers. In the middle-1990s there were an estimated 12,000 youth workers in the state of Victoria. Of these approximately 4000 were in paid employment while the other 8000 were volunteer youth workers. Of the paid workers, approximately 1,400 were casual workers and 1,000 were part-time workers. (Ministerial Review, 1995). Youth workers are generally not employed in the education system in the way they are in the United Kingdom. Although youth workers are not employed within the state education system, some local governments (that is, those local governments who do employ youth workers) have formalised working relations with local schools. Local governments are not required by law to provide youth services or employ youth workers.

An estimated 8% of Victorian youth workers have a diploma or tertiary degree in youth work. The tertiary education institutions currently offering youth work training in Victoria are the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), currently producing approximately 40 graduates a year, and the Victorian University of Technology (VUT) which had its first intake in March 1996. All Australian youth work degrees are housed in universities which had their origins in the now-disbanded College of Advanced Education system modelled on the United Kingdom Polytechnic. A further 26% have degrees or diplomas in youth work areas like teaching and social work (Ministerial Review, 1995).

The Tertiary and Further Education (TAFE) sector produces around 200 graduates per year. There is no direct equivalent to the TAFE sector in the United Kingdom. The TAFE qualification however is not at the tertiary level; the closest English equivalent would be a polytechnic certificate. TAFE offers post-secondary but non-higher education training and vocational education. It is widely seen as under-resourced in comparison with the university system. Approximately 14% have qualified through the Tertiary and Further Education (TAFE) with an Advanced Certificate in Residential and Community Services (ACRACS).

Outside Victoria there are a number of education institutions around Australia currently offering courses specifically in youth studies or youth work. At the undergraduate level a three year degree is offered at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Western Australia. This program does provide a gender inclusive curriculum and carries additional units that explore issues and skills for working with different groups of young women. Similarly the University of Western Sydney in New South Wales offers a Bachelor of youth work course. Other universities such as the Queensland University of Technology, the University of Queensland, the University of Northern Queensland and the University of South Australia provide youth-based units in welfare related courses.

Each of the states Tertiary and Further Education (TAFE) systems have either one or two year youth work or youth studies courses. For example, New South Wales alone has an enrolment of 164 in a two year Associate Diploma of Youth Work

and 45 in an advanced certificate. South Australia and Western Australia each have a one year Certificate course while Queensland has a two year Advanced Certificate course. The community and government sector also offer in-service training. That sector includes agencies like the Salvation Army, Children's and Adolescent Services, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the various state government departments of Health and Community Service.

Gendering the curriculum

Australia has its points of similarity and difference with many predominantly English-speaking societies. One of those commonalities was the emergence of a second wave of Australian feminism in the mid-to late 1960s. Australia was early to host 'second wave feminism'. There were significant expressions of the women's movement like the annual Women and Labour Conferences that began to be held in the 1970s and attracted audiences, the size of which astonished international visitors. Australian feminists became a prominent part of the university culture, although this may have been expressed only in a slow and still incomplete incorporation of women's studies programs in universities and CAEs. While there is still debate about the extent of the political and policy shifts addressing gender issues, discrimination and equal employment opportunity issues, there is little doubt that in a broad sense, the women's movement helped to reshape the political and policy landscape in Australia (for a discussion of this see Johnson, 1990; Yates, 1993). Unquestionably one of those achievements was the way the various issues of gender, curricula and education were placed early and firmly on the public agenda in Australia. In education scholarship there was an intensification of scholarly interest in the question of gender and schools (for example see: Connell, Ashenden, Kessler & Dowlett, 1982; Yates, 1993).

The Australian women's movement recognised early that gender, the curricula and education, in the school and in the home, was a major problem, too often rendered invisible by those with an interest in maintaining and defending the way things were. Conferences, seminars and consciousness-raising groups identified the widespread problem that 'gender blindness' represented in most women's lives. Moves to establish gender inclusive curricula began to be put in place in the 1970s while educationists and law-reformers pressured governments in the 1970s to address gender discriminatory practices in schools. From the 1970s on, a number of reports on education responded to the problems arising from the differential treatment received by male compared to female students. Typically those responses to the disadvantages suffered by many female students because of different learning experiences included recommendations for the implementation of policies and strategies to combat sexist practices in education institutions. This included the implementation of affirmative action policies, programs to increase the sensitivity of educators to gender issues, the establishment of various equity projects and the development of gender inclusive curricula (Department of Employment, Education and Training [DEET], 1987; DEET, 1988; DEET, 1988/89; Commonwealth Schools Commission [CSC], 1987). Women academics, politicians and policy-makers also produced law reforms and generated new teaching practices (Victorian Department of Labour, 1990; Lewis & Davis, 1988). Contributors to this reform process also emphasised the point that any plans to develop gender inclusive curricula needed to be realistically funded. This very practical pre-requisite is not so easily achieved given the current policy framework of fiscal restraint. Its topicality also seems to have had little effect in terms of developing a strong gender-inclusive curriculum in Victorian youth work education, a point to which we now turn.

Gender in the Victorian youth work curriculum

Traditionally gender has been given little if any recognition in the development of the Victorian tertiary-level youth work curriculum (Hamilton-Smith and Brownell, 1973). This is evident in both the curricula, unit outlines and in the texts prescribed for such youth work students through the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. The neglect of gender in youth work education is especially evident in the curriculum of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) youth work program which until 1996 had a monopoly position in the provision of tertiary level youth work education in Victoria. Until 1996 students have been introduced as part of their introduction to youth studies to the category of 'youth' as if it were a trans-historical and gender-neutral category (Ewen, 1983). Students were given a very clear impression that 'youth' had always existed in something like its contemporary representations at least since Socrates in classical Greece. There was certainly little if any critical attention given to its discursive constitution either in an historical dimension or to the masculinist construction of key categories, sets of knowledge and masculinist definitions of expertise (RMIT Youth Studies 1A unit outline, 1993, 1994).

A more interesting case is represented in the recent Draft National Competency Standards for the Youth Sector (NYSTU, 1993). The product of a lengthy and wide-ranging research and consultative process across Australia with youth workers, the result is an impressive list of competencies at various levels of youth work practice, identified in some 35 possible units of youth work curriculum and running to 209 pages. It set out what:

> *youth sector workers across Australia are expected to do. It does not as a curriculum document or set of selection criteria might, describe in an explicit way what workers are expected to know or what values and attitudes they should have ... The competency standards do not prescribe what or how training providers should teach. They simply state what minimum standards of practice they should be helping learners to meet (NYSTU, 1993 p. 3).*

The document aspires to and achieves a high level of operational specificity about what workers should be able to do combined with a nearly systematic abstractness. Overwhelmingly the document speaks in terms of 'young people' and never in terms of young men and women. Gender is referred to only very occasionally as a 'difference between people to be respected' (NYSTU, 1993 p. 16) while it is not identified as an issue facing young people (NYSTU, 1993 p. 17). Gender is missing from observations about communications skills and abilities but is snuck in again as one of the factors influencing the situation of young people along with 'culture', age, ability, class, race, religious and political beliefs. Very occasionally the document becomes specific when for example, it identifies 'racist, sexist and heterosexist' behaviour in groups as something 'to be responded to appropriately' (NYSTU, 1993 p. 121). In its rush to say something about everything the Draft statement seems to have fallen into the trap of saying little of substance about things that matter.

The inability to recognise the gendered nature of the categories and the practices of youth work was particularly evident in the subject considered by many Victorian youth work educators to be central to youth work, social group work (see RMIT, Social Group Work Unit Outline, 1989-1994). Group work according to some youth work educators, constitutes an important part of youth work's 'unique' body of knowledge that thereby distinguishes youth work from other human service work - especially social work. This claim is also based on the belief that as adolescence is a period in which young people are most likely to be influenced by their peer groups, then a capacity to intervene at the group level takes on special significance.

The syllabus for these units and the texts prescribed for social group work are richly suggestive of the way gender is made to go away - as are most of the other key identity markers (Button, 1974; 1981; 1982; Johnson and Johnson, 1982; Douglas, 1988; 1983; Tyson, 1989; Watson, Vallee & Mulford, 1980). Even the more contemporary texts ignore or give fleeting attention to the question of gender, for example, Tyson, 1989, devotes one paragraph to the subject. These texts represent 'young people' as classless, genderless, uncoloured and unbelieving abstractions. The lack of specificity (in what are mostly British texts) is an extraordinary and largely unremarked-on feature.

'Youth', 'adolescence' and 'delinquency' as masculine constructs

In broad terms the 'gender blindness' and/or presumption that a 'gender-neutral' approach is acceptable, even normative, seems to be deeply inscribed into the evolution of the knowledge-base of youth work. The constitution of social categories like 'youth', 'adolescence' and 'delinquency' continues to inform and shape the youth work curriculum. Major recent texts like *Youth in Australia* give minimal attention to the question of gender, identifying 'gender issues' on three pages in a 398 page text (Irving, Maunders & Sherington, 1995).

Misogyny and gender-blindness have been powerful leit motifs in the evolution of what can be called the Western canon of 'great ideas' (Bloom, 1994). Feminist historians and theorists can readily point to the long history of misogyny in the foundational philosophy and the humanist and political theory of the West (from Plato to Aristotle through to Kant and Russell) and in the frameworks of Christian institutions and theology (Pateman, 1989). In the nineteenth century when men dominated medicine, psychology, and more generally university-based education, it was perhaps inevitable that masculinist premises would inform the dominant intellectual and educational frameworks (for a more developed account of this see Griffin, 1993). It is hardly surprising that the development of categories central to modern youth work should bear witness to this general point.

McRobbie has rightly argued that much of the research and writing on young people simply deleted female experiences (McRobbie, 1991). In general terms the very idea of 'youth' has been filled implicitly and explicitly with masculine referents, a trend especially apparent in twentieth century disciplines like psychology, sociology and economics, all of which have assumed that certain male experiences, values and aspirations provide the norms for talking about 'human' experience. The origins of modern and social scientific interest in 'adolescence' can be dated to 1904 and the publication by the eminent American psychologist G. Stanley-Hall of his two-volume study, *Adolescence*. Here Stanley-Hall established 'youth' and 'adolescence' as constructs centred around an ideal-typical, albeit invisible, male subject. 'Adolescence' and the closely associated concept of 'juvenile delinquency' generalise male experience to fill out an account of human development. Well into the 1960s the dominant psychological accounts of delinquency assumed masculine norms of social adjustment, rationality and maturity. We need only look at the work of Piaget, Maslow or Bronfenbrenner to see the extent to which psychology operated on this assumption. The continued uncritical use of traditional categories of 'youth', 'adolescence' and 'delinquency' in tertiary youth work programs speaks to the unreconstructed character of much under - graduate youth work education.

A glance at some contemporary mainstream scholarship in the areas of youth studies, juvenile justice and criminology suggests a persistent gender blindness (Wall, 1947; Ewen, 1983). As Barbara Hudson noted when youth experts noticed young women

historically, femininity was defined in terms of what a girl was supposed to be acquiring. This meant that:

> *... any signs that she is rejecting rather than embracing the culturally-defined femininity [was] treated ... as necessitating active intervention and urgent resocialisation (Hudson 1984 p. 44).*

In her study of 'offending girls' Carrington has illustrated how it was 'unfeminine' behaviour that got (and gets) girls into real bother. The 'problem' was/is the refusal of such girls to accept what was/is seen as their legitimate sexuality, and their apparent opposition to being integrated into the cultures of femininity. Girls who enter men's public spaces on the street, who engage in visible youth culture demonstrate a defiance of the 'cultures of femininity' (Carrington, 1993 p. 102-104). Cain recapitulates this point, noting how dominant notions of standard male behaviour become the referent as well as arbitrator of moral and normal youthful female conduct. The treatment of males is presumed to be a norm or yardstick against which the treatment of females may be judged. But such a yardstick leaves unanalysed the substance of what is being analysed (Cain, 1989 p. 2).

This is not to deny that in parts of contemporary Australian criminology, youth studies and sociology, gender is now receiving the careful and critical attention it warrants (Carrington, 1993; Tait, 1993; White, 1990; Alder, 1994). And in some parts of the modern youth work curriculum typically involving introduction to a range of organisational and administrative practice issues, attention is now being given to the topic of working with young women (RMIT Youth Studies; Youth Program Organisation, 1989-1994; See also 'suggested reading' for the unit: Mountain, A 1989, *A Handbook for Women: Working with Young Women at Risk or in Trouble,* National Youth Bureau). Although this is a cause for optimism, there is still not much evidence of a gender-inclusive curriculum in Victorian youth work education.

If there is a case for such a curriculum-inclusive approach to gender, then we need to ask how we might go about developing such a curriculum. One step in reworking the curriculum so as to make gender a curriculum-inclusive organising principle is to indicate how we understand and conceptualise gender.

Theorising gender: gender, difference and identity.

There is an enormous body of contemporary literature on gender curricula much of it produced in the wake of 'second wave feminism' since the mid-1960s. A central question to address here is how we can best talk about gender and the categories of girl/woman and boy/man, especially in the context of youth work curriculum design.

'Second wave feminists' in constructing an argument for gender equality developed a structuralist and liberatory argument that shared much with both mainstream (structural functionalist) sociology and post-war Marxism. As with those forms, 'structure' preceded 'identity', and agency became a subordinate element. Where those schools had identified 'society' and 'capitalism' respectively as the master social form, feminists of the 1970s identified 'patriarchy' as the master text and 'sex role socialisation' as the basis for the construction of gender roles and identity. In this narrative individual women became determined players in a vast apparatus of sexism and gendered oppression. Particular features seen as basic to what it meant to be a woman or girl were identified and used to hang all women's/girls' lives on. Gender became everything and often at the expense of other identity markers like class, ethnicity, religion, status and

personal history. The effect of arguing that women were fixed into feminine roles and oppressed by a system called 'patriarchy' while it may have been justifiable politically, also created unhelpful essentialist categories.

More recently contemporary Australian feminists (Carrington, 1993; Johnson, 1993) now emphasise the diversity of women's and girls' experiences. They warn against the tendency to essentialist categories and the sex-role induced status of women and girls. Tsolidis, who was concerned with questions of difference and ethnicity, pointed to some of the limitations inherent in essentalist categories. She detailed the dangers of becoming pre-occupied with feminist projects that focussed specifically on achieving greater equity over concerns of difference like ethnicity. Tsolidis noted how many 'black' feminists

> *... have called into question fundamental tenets of feminism by arguing that because of racism and class oppression ... they [black women] have more in common with the men from their communities than they do with white feminists (1993, p. 56).*

The idea that to be a woman (regardless of her socio-cultural or political personal history) only means 'oppression under patriarchal domination' has been well and truly challenged. There is now a growing acceptance in feminist circles that two or more women may be positioned in ways that mean they are in opposition to each other rather than in union. There is even a slow recognition that in some instances those women may have more in common with certain men than they do with each other (Yeatman, 1990, p.154). Moreover Yeatman suggests there are many forms of feminism, all shaped by the individuals' personal histories and personal agency. A woman for example who is 'white', non-English speaking, an early school leaver and conservative will develop her own feminism that will be sensible to her but may not be so to many other women.

This shift in thinking about gender has been accompanied by a recognition of the 'politics of difference'. It is no longer useful to apply supposedly all-inclusive blanket classifications when speaking about diverse groups such as 'blacks' or 'women'; nor is it particularly useful or credible to claim that all those said to fit into the categories have common features that somehow magically bond them together. Universalising a diverse range of experiences encountered by often disparate groups is not plausible. An appreciation of the different experiences of being a girl/boy or woman/man is indispensable for developing a gender-inclusive youth work curriculum.

In reference to gender this means that different groups of women and men are having their own distinct forms of feminism and masculinity recognised. What characterises some of the more recent gender/feminist literature and political action is an appreciation of the multiple constructions of feminism and masculinity and the non-unanimous, tension-filled character of what it means to a woman or a man.

It now seems possible to think about gender in ways that escape the 'sociological essentialism' both of mainstream 'sex role socialisation' theory and the feminist versions of this. Gender here points to the ways in which social practices and relations between males and females (as marked by a small number of biological sex differences) are ordered, defined, regulated, valued, institutionalised and reproduced. It also refers to the experiences and identities of both women and men. It needs to be remembered initially that in the proliferation of gender studies and gender research from the 1970s on, most attention was directed towards the experiences of women/girls.

Gender does not lend itself to be defined as an object, for such an endeavour led variously to a melange of either 'essentialist' accounts, normative definitions or semiotic approaches - all of which are problematic. What is better for talking about gender is *not* to do so as Connell argues (1995, p. 65-75) by developing character types, behavioural averages and norms. Rather, gender is best understood as those processes and relationships through which girls and women, and boys and men conduct their gendered lives (Connell, 1995, p. 71). On this account, gender is about identity and how we construct our identity with reference to ascribed norms, some of them contradictory, about 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. It assumes that identity is never a finished or stable accomplishment, since, for example, both men and women may variously identify with both masculine and feminine behaviours. In other words, various forms of masculinity are not exclusive to men, nor is femininity restricted to women.

Gender identity encompasses a rich confusion and profusion of individual differences, in which personal agency clashes with the sometimes desperate but no less firm insistence that sex and gender identities are fixed and immutable qualities and properties, and heaven help those who step out of line. Contemporary gender theory recognises that no matter what your biological sex markers, all behaviour can be made to mean ways which acknowledge a variety of masculine and feminine forms. This in no way denies the existence of dominant masculine and feminine norms for defining and valuing social practices that continue to regulate the behaviour of many.

Towards a gender-sensitive youth work curriculum

Given that gender is a fundamental principle on which our social, working relations and social-professional practices rest, it seems reasonable that questions of gender, curricula design and pedagogy be consistently integrated into youth work education. In many fields of education for human service workers such as nurse education, teacher training and social work education this objective has already been tackled, albeit with varying degrees of success. But how are we to develop a credible youth work gender-inclusive curriculum? Briefly outlined below are a number of elements of such a reconstruction.

i. Research

In developing a gender-inclusive youth work curriculum, attention needs to be paid to a number of principles and objectives. The first requirement is to revise the masculinist and/or abstracted knowledge base that in the mid-1990s still dominates much of the local youth work teaching program. The main categories used in youth work need to be critically analysed and reconstructed in a more gender-inclusive and gender sensitive way. Given that this change requires the (re-)writing of the syllabi, it requires support for research and writing projects that produce new texts and sets of knowledge that supercede the traditional masculinist scholarship.

ii. Curriculum

It also requires that gender needs to be made a central and inclusive component of the youth work curriculum in ways that are alive to the diversity of experiences and self-identities of young women and men. In doing so, recognition of the principle of difference is less likely to be overlooked in the effort to achieve greater equity. It is especially important given the educational 'mission' of youth work educators that any revised curriculum recognise the inter-relationships between theoretical and practical competencies. Youth workers do need to be able to think critically and intelligently *and* to act effectively. At the heart of any useful reconstruction will be the development of a teaching and learning strategy which draws on the insights and

knowledge and interests of teachers, students and the field. Such a teaching and learning strategy will of course address many elements other than gender but it should make gender one of the central elements in such a strategy.

Central to a teaching and learning strategy is a statement of the graduate competencies designed as outcomes of such a strategy. The identification of graduate attributes should be highly specific. In the case of gender such a list might include statements that include a range of theoretical and practical competencies such as:

> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify and critically evaluate contemporary feminist theory;*
>
> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify and critically evaluate research documenting the role of gendered discourses in shaping the lives of young people;*
>
> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify and carry out a range of communicative interventions on a one-to-one and group basis that are sensitive to different styles of gendered interactions;*
>
> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify, carry out and critically evaluate a range of qualitative and quantitative research strategies that demonstrate a sensitivity to gender as a key social variable;*
>
> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify, analyse and critically evaluate a range of research and practical communication strategies that recognise the way gender is embedded in a variety of language practices*
>
> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify and critically evaluate a range of policies where gender has played a major role in shaping the making and delivery of youth programs and policies;*
>
> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify and critically evaluate a range of organisational practices and policies that impact on men and women's roles in youth-related agencies differentially (including employment promotion and staff-development practices) and be able to specify the kinds of corrective actions that might be reasonably taken;*
>
> *Graduates will be familiar with, and be able to specify and critically evaluate the way issues relating to gender impact on professional practice and ethical issues youth workers confront.*

In terms of embedding these attributes in a three year Bachelor's degree program (which is the norm in Australian university youth work courses) there is a case for ensuring that these attributes will be reflected across the full range of subjects in the program including the implementation of the field education [or practicum] components. There is certainly no particular merit in setting up one single unit (titled something like 'Gender and Youth Work') and expecting it to carry the burden of the kind of revision specified here.

Again in developing the use of a graduate attribute statement which specifies a full range of theoretical and practical competencies, it will be important to ensure that each of the subjects in the program are able to clearly identify at the level of their teaching and learning objectives how they will give effect to the graduate attributes. This should address such issues as the specific methods of teaching and learning activities. Such subject outlines should also identify the forms of evaluation and assesment by which staff will ask students to demonstrate that they have acquired the specified competencies.

iii. Staff development

One of the more difficult tasks is the need to terminate institutional sexism. Universities and most other institutions in which youth work degree programs are offered are notoriously masculine institutions. To ensure that youth work educators are able to tackle the considerable challenge entailed in such a program of reform, it will be necessary to ensure that staff awareness of the various theoretical, research and practical competencies specified in a Teaching and Learning Strategy is achieved. To do that it may be necessary to run a series of on going and appropriate staff seminars and staff development programs. It may also be necessary to ensure that in some cases staff are given an adequate amount of sabbatical time to develop their intellectual awareness around gender issues. Either way an investment of time, money and resources will be useful in this process of improvement and quality assurance

The appointment of staff and/or the continued development of staff with the competence and enthusiasm needed to develop a gender-inclusive curriculum is paramount in addressing the question of how to develop gender-inclusive youth work learning experiences. This involves more than judicious appointments (and in some cases the availability of redundancy packages), but it also requires putting into place arrangements that ensure sexist practices between staff members are unlikely to take place and if they do that they are effectively dealt with - this includes the revision of promotional procedures.

Conclusion

The benefits from developing such a gendered-curriculum are manifold. In addressing the biological and cultural factors involved in the formation of self-identity and gender, youth work graduates are more likely to be equipped to assist young people in clarifying and working through issues in these areas. They will also be better able to deal with the many work-related tensions and conflicts that are gender based.

Such a curriculum will help youth workers address a range of health, reproductive and interpersonal issues arising out of young people's need to be knowledgable about and responsible in relation to their sexuality and to their gender roles. Although adolescence is not the only time in one's life for developing one's sexuality and gendered understanding of self-identity, it is nonetheless an important time for many young people in this regard. Many young people also confront problems of health, they may wish to regulate their fertility, need assistance with substance use, and social relations involving their sexuality (for example, they may be subject to abusive relations, have questions to ask about sexual identity and preference, etc). Accepting the enormous diversity within groups of young men and women, the fact remains there are also quite real differences between young men and women especially in terms of their needs.

Finally, a gender-sensitive youth work curriculum can help youth workers to develop systematic, practical and ethically-informed strategies, skills and knowledge-base that provides a foundation for client-youth worker relationships. This needs to include issues that arise in all-male and all-female groups as well as in mixed groups. In this way youth workers will play their part in developing to the maximum those elements normatively expressed in notions of social justice, and the fullest possible devlopment of the 'human' potential of our young men and women.

Judith Bessant *and* ***Megan Evans*** *are based at the Australian Catholic University.*

References

Alder, C. (1994) 'The Policing of Young Women', in White, R., & Alder,C., *The Police and Young People in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, pp.160-174.

(Australian) Commonwealth Schools Commission (CSC) (1987) *The National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools*, CSC, Canberra.

Bloom, H. (1994) *The Western Canon*, Basic Books, New York.

Button, L. (1974) *Developmental Group Work with Adolescence*, Hodder & Stoughton, London.

Button, L. (1981) *Group Tutoring for the Form Teacher; 2 Upper Secondary school*, Hodder & Stoughton, London.

Cain, M. (ed), (1989) *Growing Up Good: Policing the Behaviour of Girls in Europe*, Sage, London.

Carrington, K . (1993) *Offending Girls: Sex, Youth and Justice*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Connell, R. (1995) *Masculinities*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Connell, R., Ashden, D., Kessler, S., & Dowlett, G., (1982) *Making the Difference: Schools, Families and Social Division*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

DEET, (Department of Employment, Education and Training) (1987) *Ethnicity, Education and Equity*, DEET Canberra.

DEET, (1988) *Taking Part. Education Participation in the 1980s*, AGPS, Canberra.

DEET, (1988-89) *Girls in Schools: Report on the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools*, Nos 1 & 2, DEET, Canberra.

Douglas, T. (1988) *Basic Group* Work, Routledge, London.

Douglas, T. (1983) *Groups: Understanding People Gathered together*, Routledge, London.

Ewen, J. (1983) *Youth in Australia: a new role and new deal for the 80s*, Phillip Institute of Technology, Coburg.

Griffin, C. (1993) *Representations of Youth: The Study of Youth and Adolescence in Britain and America*, Polity press, Cambridge, UK.

Hamilton-Smith, E. & Brownell, D. (1973) *Youth Workers and Their Training*, Youth Workers Association of Victoria, Melbourne.

Hudson, B. (1984) 'Femininity and Adolescence', in McRobbie, A. and Nava M. (eds), *Gender and Generation*, Macmillan, London.

Irving, T., Maunders, D., & Sherington, G., (1995) *Youth In Australia: Policy, Administration and Politics*, Macmillan, Melbourne.

Johnson, D. & Johnson, F. (1982) *Joining Together: Group Therapy and Group Skills*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.

Johnson, L. (1990) 'Gender Issues and Education', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 11.

Johnson, L. (1993) *The Modern Girl: Girlhood and Growing Up*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Lewis, A. & Davis, A. (1988) *Professional Development Manual; Gender Equity in Maths and Science*, Curriculum Development Centre, Melbourne.

Ministerial Review of the Training of Youth Workers in Victoria, (1995) Victorian State Government, June.

McRobbie, A. (1991) *Feminism and Youth Culture*, Macmillan, London.

NYSTU, (1993) *Draft National Competency Standards for the Youth Sector*, NYSTU, Canberra.

Pateman, C. (1989) *The Sexual Contract*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

RMIT, (1993 & 1994) Department of Youth Affairs, Youth Studies 1A Subject ouline.

RMIT, (1989-1994) Department of Youth Affairs, Social Group Work unit outlines,

Tait, G. (1993) 'Youth, Personhood and "Practices of the Self": Some New Directions for Youth Research', *Australian New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, Vol 29, No 1, pp 22-40.

Tsolidis, T. (1993) 'Difference and Identity - A Feminist Debate Indicating Directions for the Development of Transformative Curriculum', *Melbourne Studies in Education*, pp.51-62.

Tyson, T. (1989) *Working with Groups*, Macmillan, Melbourne.

Victorian Department of Labour, (1990) *The Sky is the Limit: Broadening Career Prospect for Girls*, Women's Employment Branch, Department of Labour, Melbourne.

Wall, W .D. (1947) *The Adolescent Child*, Methuen, London.

Watson, H., Vallee, J. & Mulford, W. (1980) *Structured Experiences and Group Development*, Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra.

White, R. (1990) *No Space of their Own; Young People and Social Contorl in Australia*, Cambridge Uinversity Press, Oakleigh.

Yates, L. (1993) *The Education of Girls: Policy, Research and the Question of Gender* Hawthorn, Victoria, ACER.

Yeatman, A. (1990) *Bureaucrats, Technocrats, Femoncrats: Essays on the Contemporary Australian State*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

SOCIOLOGY

THE JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Editors Joan Busfield and Ted Benton
University of Essex   Published Quarterly February, May, August and November

Volume 30 No.3 contained the following articles

ARTICLES
Rosemary Crompton. Paid Employment and the Changing System of Gender Relations.

Jonathon Gabe abd Michael Bury. *Halcion* Nights: A Sociological Account of a Medical Controversy

Jacqueline Scott, Duane F. Alwin and Michael Brown Changing Sex-role Attitudes

Mariana Valverde. The Dialectic of the Familiar and the Unfamiliar

Bryn Jones. Left-Wing Activism in a Changing Political Culture

Paul Watt. Social Stratification and Housing Mobility

Andy Furlong, Andy Biggart and Fred Cartmel. Neighbourhoods, Opportunity Structures and Occupational Aspirations

Graham Scrambler. The 'Project of Modernity' and the Parameters for a Critical Sociology

RESEARCH NOTE
Frank Bechhofer. Quantitative Research in British Sociology: Substantive Dogs and Methodological Tails Revisited

COMMENT
Malcolm Waters. Human Rights and the Universalisation of Interests

REVIEW SECTION

REVIEW ESSAY
Derek Layder. Contemporary Sociological Theory

BOOK REVIEWS AND BOOKS RECEIVED

SUBSCRIPTIONS

INDIVIDUALS UK	£23.50
INSTITUTIONS UK	£77.50
INDIVIDUALS OVERSEAS	£28.50
INSTITUTIONS OVERSEAS	£85.50

Cheques should be made payable to BSA PUBLICATIONS LTD., and sent to:-
BSA Publications Ltd., 351 Station Road, Dorridge, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 8EY, England

UNEMPLOYED AND UNDER 18:

struggling between subsistence and destitution

GARY POLLOCK

Introduction

Since 1988, as a result of the Fowler review of Social Security in the mid 1980s, income support is no longer an automatic entitlement to those aged 16 or 17. There are very few exceptions to this rule, cases of 'severe hardship' being perhaps the most important. A person who has qualified for Income Support (IS) under the severe hardship rule must register at their local careers office and attend an interview once a fortnight. Failure to do so may result in the benefit being stopped. Of interest are the experiences of those who find themselves claiming under this rule. A sample of severe hardship claimants who have been unemployed for at least six months were interviewed and asked about their experiences of, and attitudes to education, employment, leisure and family relationships. An analysis of their responses shows that being in employment is a central concern for all, these young people are far from being part of an underclass with no desire to work. The majority of the sample were optimistic about getting a full-time job despite their lack of success so far. Also of importance is that these young people do not have anyone to whom they can turn for financial support on a week to week basis. In most cases they bear the full brunt of the severe poverty of their unemployment rather than being cushioned by a close relative who is able to buy them food, clothes etc. and tide them over until the next benefit cheque.

Background

For young people coming to the end of compulsory schooling, a number of alternatives have always faced them - these alternatives have changed over the years. Firstly, they could find a job, the chances of which began to decrease as unemployment increased in the early 1970s. Secondly, they could continue with full time education. Up until the expansion of the further education sector in the 1970s the post-school education route was generally taken by young people from middle-class families (Ashton and Field, 1976). The expansion of further education and the introduction of many vocational courses opened up post-school education to young people from working class backgrounds. Failing finding a job or carrying on with full time education it was possible for young people to claim benefit. In 1978 and 1983 new additions to the list of alternatives were made, namely the Youth Opportunity Programme and the Youth Training Scheme respectively, later renamed Youth Training (YT). Here was an option which was neither employment nor benefit; in fact, it was often viewed as being worse than benefit (Hutson and Jenkins, 1989). In 1988, however, at a time when finding a job straight after school had significantly decreased in viability, the option to claim benefit was withdrawn for 16 and 17 year olds. The withdrawal of automatic entitlement to income support for 16 and 17 year olds has significantly changed the lives of some young people.

Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) are responsible for placing 16 and 17 year olds on YTs using a list of names supplied by the Benefits Agency. Those looking to claim benefit are funnelled towards the TECs. This, in theory, removes the need for paying Income Support to 16 and 17 year olds. TECs, however, have been

unable to guarantee YT places for all those seeking places, mainly due to employers being unable or unwilling to participate as a result of the recession (CAB Evidence, 1992). As a result there are a number of young people who are able to claim income support under the 'severe hardship' rule. This rule is one of the few exceptions[1] to the overall restriction whereby only those aged 18 and over are eligible for income support. The payment of income support in cases of 'severe hardship' is at the discretion of the Secretary of State and is not subject to appeal. Factors taken into account when assessing 'severe hardship' are illness/disability, savings, the possibility of being helped by someone else, threat or experience of homelessness and no parental support, possibly due to the parents themselves being on benefit. It is thus defined in terms of assessing the threat to the young person's health and living standards. 'Severe hardship' Income Support has been set up as a short-term measure to cover a time during which young persons can find a job or a YT place. They are allowed to re-apply should they not secure anything. A successful claimant must register at their local careers office and attend an interview there on a regular basis[2] in order to remain eligible for the benefit. The payment of 'severe hardship' Income Support has thus always been on the understanding that work or a scheme is being sought. The new Job Seekers Allowance operates in a similar way, it is paid for seeking a job rather than for being unemployed. Here job seekers agreements are used as a contract between the Benefits Agency and the claimant to enable benefit to be stopped if the claimant is unable to show that jobs are being looked for. As such it appears to represent a streamlining of government benefits, such moves have been characterised as improving the monitoring of means tested benefits at the expense of targeting those in need (Sinfield, 1995).

This paper is based upon interviews held in careers offices in Manchester in the month of March 1994. The careers service plays a key role in the administration of benefits to severe hardship claimants given that compulsory regular attendance is required at a careers office interview. Benefit cheques are issued on the understanding that the young person is in regular attendance at the careers office. Non-attendance may eventually result in non-payment of benefits.

Previous Youth Studies

The study of youth, and in particular of the problems experienced (and caused) by young people in society has a long history, particularly in relation to employment and unemployment, see for example, Jewkes and Winterbottom (1933) and Meara (1936). These early studies were important in establishing the routes by which young people (mainly young men) found jobs. They highlighted the importance of personal contacts and also that early labour market experience had important effects on future employment prospects. In particular so-called 'chronic' job changers were likely to be concentrated in unskilled 'blind-alley' jobs. Hence studies dating from before the second world war emphasise problems associated with young people establishing themselves in the labour market. For about 25 years after the end of the war transitions between school and employment were not a major problem as there were plenty of jobs for young people. This changed as a consequence of a changing economy which was no longer able to sustain high employment levels, together with a variety of government policies such as increasing the school leaving age, restricting access to benefits, eroding the level of state subsidy of full-time further and higher education, young people have become more dependent on their families, thus delaying their status as full adult

citizens (Jones and Wallace, 1992). Hence the debates surrounding the problems of youth transition into the labour market re-emerged. It is apparent that the period following the end of the war when transitions were relatively smooth is best understood as an aberration. There has been, to some extent, a belief that the increase in problems relating to the transition from school to work experienced by young people since the 1970s is a new phenomenon, but this is simply not the case.

The changes in the economy since the 1970s, notably the decline in those industries which traditionally offered apprenticeships to young workers, and the rise in the service sector which encouraged many women into the workforce, inevitably shifted the debate towards the increasing competition for fewer jobs. Unemployment was high and it had a disproportionate effect on young people (Roberts, 1984). Governmental responses to these changes were to develop policies directed at expanding the education and training of young people, this led to studies assessing the worth of such packages particularly in the absence of employment after the training (see Finn, 1987). The increase in the length of the transition from school to work experienced since the 1970s is common to most advanced industrial societies, indeed a comparison of rates of transition from school to work in England and Germany found that German transitions were taking significantly longer (Roberts *et al*, 1994). At this time, interest was growing in the types of jobs young people were entering, and out of these studies emerged an awareness of the existence of youth labour markets distinct from other labour markets, (see Ashton *et al*, 1982; Ashton *et al*, 1987). Thus an interest in the changing economy, and in the experiences of youth within these changes ensured that the interface between school and employment became of central importance

Studies dating from the early 1970s (Patrick, 1973; Parker, 1974; Willis, 1977) and onwards aimed at providing the fullest accounts of the life experiences of young people. By examining their whole social sphere, these accounts, often based on ethnographic data, and the ones that followed in the 1980s (Jenkins, 1983; Coffield et al 1986; Wallace, 1987; Hutson and Jenkins, 1989; Allat and Yeandle, 1992) have shown the importance of contextualizing events such as unemployment and redundancy in relation to, for example, home life and leisure activities. The family and household have been seen to play a crucial role in facilitating a smooth transition into adulthood. This role includes the provision of financial and emotional support, and access to other social networks which are important for socialising and for help in the search for jobs.

This research project is most closely aligned to the study of cultures and lifestyles in that unemployment is being examined in relation to other aspects of social life such as relationships with family and others, day to day living, and both educational and employment experiences. It is an attempt to make sense of the social world of the young unemployed, to understand the factors which affect their life situation and to explore the choices they make in relation to the options faced.

Methodology

The City of Manchester is one of ten areas which make up Greater Manchester County. It was chosen for this study because it has a large urban population with high rates of unemployment relative to the other nine administrative areas, as well as nationally. In July 1994 the unemployment rate was 18% for the City of Manchester and 9% for the whole of the UK, at this time 43% of those unemployed in

Manchester were long-term. Youth unemployment (16 to 19 years), while falling by 9% between 1993 and 1994 stood at 24%[3]; this is 5% greater than the equivalent figure for Great Britain for the same period[4]. This general picture hides a more variable spatial distribution of unemployment within Manchester, the lowest youth unemployment rate (April 1994) being 13% in Moston, the highest 38% in the Central ward. Nationally there were 139,834 applications for Income Support through severe hardship status, 87% of which were successful for the year until the end of June 1994. The figures for Manchester for the same period were 7,901 applications, 89% of which were successful[5].

All severe hardship claimants must regularly attend a careers office interview in order to qualify for income support thus the careers offices were an obvious access route for contacting potential interviewees. Manchester has four careers offices, three of which were operational at the time of the research. Permission was granted to attend these three offices where interviewing facilities were also made available. To be included in the sample a person had to be aged 16 or 17 and have been unemployed for at least six months within the last year. In order to access those regularly in and out of work, a group equally interesting and relevant to the study as those consistently and long term out of work, these six months did not have to be continuous. Thus someone who had experienced two periods of unemployment, each for three months within the past year, would qualify. The six month requirement also implied that 16 year olds were likely to be fewer in number than 17 year olds. Potential subjects were initially approached by a careers officer who informed them briefly of the research project and then they were invited to be interviewed. They were also told that they could refuse do this. The sample is thus self-selected and there is potentially a problem of selection bias in relation to the type of people who declined to be interviewed. It appears that lack of time was often stated as the reason - going to the careers office was often tied in with some other sort of activity - going to the dentist, doctor, housing office or meeting friends.

Interviews were taped and subsequently transcribed and analysed. An 'aide memoir' was used with a list of topic areas which were to be covered in as natural a sequence as possible. The areas discussed in each interview can be grouped under five headings; education, employment, money, free-time and social life. An attempt was thus made to make the interview as conversational and as little like a formal interview as possible (Lofland, 1971). This was perhaps an optimistic strategy given the institutional setting within which the interviews were held but it was felt to be more conducive to creating as relaxed an atmosphere as possible in order to encourage the interviewee to speak freely.

sample profile

		Male	Female	Totals
Black	*age 16*	0	0	0
	age 17	2	0	2
White	*age 16*	2	3	5
	age 17	10	4	14
Totals		**14**	**7**	**21**

Findings

Education

Most young people leave secondary education with a number of qualifications which allow them to enter either further education or the world of work directly. The link between educational achievement and finding employment early in a young person's career has been well established (see Furlong 1990). Failure to gain qualifications puts young people at a particular disadvantage in terms of employment, narrowing the range of jobs that they can be considered for. The majority of the sample left school at the earliest age possible, taking few if any exams, and so there was a distinct absence of qualifications in most cases. The reasons for this were not always purely lack of ability or lack of interest, five of the sample reported a satisfactory performance at school up until the age of 14 or 15. Thus it would appear that other factors have been involved in determining the amount and quality of qualifications gained, 'getting into trouble' at school and being arrested by the police were often mentioned as significant turning points. There were many criticisms of school in general, many felt that the subjects taught were not worthwhile in terms of preparation for life afterwards. This is despite the fact that the majority of the sample followed courses with a vocational element and participated in a work experience programme. Nonetheless, it was reported by all interviewed that they wished that they had worked harder at school in order to have gained a good set of qualifications.

Qualifications were felt to be an important factor (along with personal contacts) in getting jobs in general, and in particular getting the type of job one would like to have. This belief stems from the experiences of the young people when they were looking for jobs rather than from knowledge of how other people they know with qualifications have fared in the labour market. Employers often had stressed their lack of experience and qualifications as important weaknesses. Qualifications were not seen as a passport to a job, many of those interviewed talked of friends who had qualifications but who had still been unemployed for a long time. As one young man described;

> *...me mate thought that he could get a good job after continuing in education went to University and all, he ain't getting no jobs. It took time and all that money ... wasted.*

Rather than being of direct relevance to a particular job, qualifications were seen as a basic credential that employers would regard as a necessity. This supports the findings of Allat and Yeandle (1992) who found that young people regarded qualifications as an arbitrary requirement. Seven of the twenty-one had experience of further education having started vocational courses, but no-one completed a course. It would appear that there was a desire for qualifications but an inability to secure them. Indeed, for most, going into further education was seen as a good idea but there was a reluctance to do so because, based on their experiences of compulsory schooling, they felt that they would not apply themselves sufficiently and thus either leave the course prior to completion or fail it. Post 16 education was seen as little more than an extension of compulsory education regardless of any differences between schools and colleges in relation to subjects followed and a potentially more flexible day-to-day time-table. This rather cynical view of the worth of qualifications is likely to be related to the circumstances these young people were in at this time. Perhaps given greater success in the

labour market a different attitude would prevail. There is, for example, evidence that young workers in established apprenticeships actually value the learning experience of school and college at least as much and possibly more than the qualification itself (Blackman and Evans, 1994).

Employment and Unemployment

The study of youth employment and unemployment has a long history stretching back to early this century when the 'boy labour problem' was debated (Casson, 1979). Since these early studies a large body of research has examined the types of jobs taken by young people, and the reasons why some young people secure better jobs than others. Of importance has been the general finding that the young are often hit the hardest when unemployment rates rise. In periods of high general unemployment, the young suffer disproportionately badly because their jobs are more peripheral and they are more likely to be made redundant than most adult employees (Roberts, 1984). During such times of recession the in-flow to unemployment increases for young people, there does however remain a high out-flow into employment. Hence the picture of youth unemployment is not a static one but is characterised by frequent job changing. High rates of job movement by young people on initial entry into the labour market have been a long standing feature of research into youth and employment (Jewkes and Winterbottom, 1933; Banks et al, 1992). The evidence here provides further support for the existence of this pattern. Despite the fact that all of the sample already had considerable experience of unemployment, most of the young people had been employed at some stage since leaving school. Indeed seven had gone straight from school to a job. These jobs were not kept for long, however, most terminating within four weeks with almost equal levels of being laid off and leaving voluntarily. Although these young people had been in the labour market for less than two years a significant amount of job changing had occurred, half the sample had had at least two full time jobs, and four had three - all of these jobs were unskilled. Jobs such as supermarket check-out operator, sales assistant, supermarket meat counter assistant, shelf-stacker, dish-washer, waiter and waitress were reported.

There were clear gendered differences in many areas related to employment, from type of job looked for to reasons for leaving or being made redundant. The young men tended to have a much lower job commitment than the young women and seemed more likely to leave a job because they found it dull whereas the young women were more likely to leave a job because they felt uncomfortable in the work-place. At various times the young women mentioned being unable to get along with their immediate superiors, in some cases reporting instances of sexual harassment which were instrumental in leaving the job. The 'no-win' situation in which women who experience sexual harassment find themselves has been documented elsewhere (Cockburn, 1991; Collinson and Collinson, 1996). For these young women, having a badly paid job with little prospects and sexual harassment is easily rejected in favour of having no job and no sexual harassment. The young women often described feeling that the work was not explained well enough, if at all, thus when tasks were not completed satisfactorily it meant that they were called to account by their superiors. Bad relations at work were reported by the young men but in only three instances was it stated to be instrumental in leaving a job. Reports of redundancies by the young men were often accompanied by an admission that it was deserved. Poor time keeping and bad performance at work were the main reasons given.

An aspect of the segmented labour market approach asserts that young people in unskilled jobs, on low pay and with unstable conditions, are looking for a better paid job with better conditions of work (Roberts, 1984). This was supported in the research. The primary function of work was reported as being to provide money to finance other activities. At this stage in their lives this meant being able to afford to go out more, to buy more and better quality clothes, and to buy other commodities such as a bicycle, a hi-fi and so on. The worth of having a job in itself was also mentioned but was clearly of secondary importance. Nonetheless, there was clear evidence to support the existence of a 'work ethic' despite the experience of unemployment and the dissatisfaction with the jobs. The financial importance of work was also brought out when interviewees talked of the future; only with a job could they ever buy a car or a house or raise a family.

The past twenty years has witnessed a growth in theories of the so-called 'underclass' the members of which are said to be so disadvantaged that they are beneath the bottom of the class structure. Two broad conceptions of underclass theory have been identified by Gallie as 'conservative' and 'radical' (Gallie 1994). Firstly, the conservative theories, which are often used as part of a politically right wing ideology, assert that individual failings propel people into the underclass. Individual factors are essential to such theories - people can 'choose' to be either in or out of the underclass. It is also argued that high benefits levels and opportunities to make money through crime discourage members of the underclass from 'choosing' to find legal employment (see for example, Mead, 1986; Murray, 1990). A supposed decline in the desire to work, participation in the 'informal economy', and an unwillingness to partake in training schemes are described by those who argue that an 'underclass' of idle, work-shy criminals is taking root in society (Murray, 1990). Secondly, the radical conception of the underclass is that it consists of a group of people who are most at risk from experiencing unemployment due to a combination of structural factors such as the changing labour market and individual factors such as a person's skills. This alternative view (for example, Wilson, 1987) implies that most members of the underclass would rather have a job than be claiming benefit, individual 'choice' is thus of minimal importance. Under both versions of the underclass theory the severe hardship claimants interviewed here could clearly be considered to be part of such an underclass. Addressed below are the topics of job search activity, the desire to find worthwhile employment, undeclared earnings and experiences of youth training. The results give a revealing contribution to the debates surrounding individualistic explanations of unemployment which are embedded in the conservative version of underclass theory.

There was a great deal of job search activities[6] reported by the interviewees. These included regular visits to the job centre, replying to advertisements in local newspapers and shop windows and making informal enquiries to certain firms. This was accompanied by very little success however. With one notable exception whereby an informal enquiry did actually produce a job, most jobs were discovered through personal contacts of one sort or another (see also Cameron et al, 1943; Wallace, 1987). Bearing this in mind, and that the interviewees often referred to the importance of personal contacts in finding jobs, it is surprising that so much job search activity is taking place. Studies have shown that levels of job search tend to decrease as time spent unemployed increases (Furlong, 1992). The evi-

dence here is not so clear, it is likely that the regular contact with the careers office encourages more sustained levels of job-search. Perhaps of more relevance is the growing strictness of the rules by which eligibility to benefits is decided such that claimants must be 'actively seeking work'. Importantly, some of the young people were not just searching for any job, they had clear occupational aspirations. The young men in particular talked of definite attributes they would like to have in a job such as not being tied to a single work-place, working outside, jobs that involve travelling from one place to another. The young women were either unsure and indicated that they were looking for anything, or they tended to respond with particular jobs such as working in a shop, restaurant or nursery. These aspirations were generally realistic and achievable, the young women had no exaggerated expectations of the labour market. This pattern has been found elsewhere (Chisolm and du Bois-Reymond, 1993) and is explained as a result of a growing awareness of the practical issues in relation to finding a job after the end of full-time education. Notable throughout the discussions on employment was the optimism felt by virtually all interviewees in respect of finding future work. Despite having experienced much unemployment, being made redundant, and having little work experience or educational qualifications, there was a feeling, that some time in the not too distant future they would find a job. This job would supply the money they wanted but also it would be the kind of job that they would like to have. This optimism was reflected in one young man's words;

> *Well I've always wanted to work with cars. I mean, lets face it how many cars are there around? There's always going to be people wanting them fixing so I know that I'll be alright, I'll get in at a garage.*

In this regard these young people had clear career aspirations, the quality of job being sought was still an important factor as has been found elsewhere (Coffield et al, 1983; Finn, 1987; Furlong 1987). Their optimism, whilst probably being related to their relative inexperience in the labour market, is still indicative that these young people want to work. Murray's assertion of a falling commitment to work among long term unemployed people is not supported.

In stark contrast to the image of unemployed people working 'on the sly' in Murray's underclass theory, there was virtually no evidence that the interviewees were working in the 'informal economy'. One interviewee had worked on a building site for which he was not officially contracted, and three of the young women had been paid, received food and given somewhere to stay for the night in return for baby-sitting - hardly evidence of a large-scale calculated attempt to de-fraud the benefits system. This supports the findings of other studies which have shown that the unemployed are less likely than the employed to participate in such illegal activities. They simply do not possess the contacts or the equipment which are available to those in employment and which are necessary for success in the informal economy (Pahl, 1984; McLaughlin et al, 1989).

The government's main response to rising levels of youth unemployment has been the various youth training initiatives. Youth Training has developed into a nation-wide system whereby employers and TECs collaborate to place young people with employers who are supposed to train them. The quality of training given by employers has been shown to be highly variable (Blackman, 1988; Roberts and Parsell, 1989).

The young people in this study had negative attitudes towards Youth Training because they did not expect that employers would supply worthwhile training, nor would they have the prospect of continuing as a full employee. Youth Training was thus generally looked down upon by all the young people. It was criticised in particular for being 'slave labour' in return for a full working week they would be paid little more than the income support they were currently receiving. In addition, the positive aspects of being trained were ridiculed by the interviewees as a weak justification for cheap labour. It is clear these young people had experienced the worst kind of Youth Training, that which benefits an employer seeking to fill a semi- or unskilled position with little or no skill based training taking place. One young woman described why she had left YT;

> *I couldn't stand it. Cooking, the kitchen stunk, you had to go to Marple every morning so we had to be up at seven o-clock ... it was slave labour. £29.50 for like from about eight 'til four, just grafting all day. It done me head in. I thought, is it my kind of work?*

This contradicts work showing that, as Youth Training has become more established, attitudes to it have become more favourable (Raffe and Smith, 1987). The young people in this study described how, after bus fares and lunches had been paid for, the YT would bring in less than £20 per week. Here we can see the importance of pay and quality of work: both were regarded as essential features of a job. Research elsewhere (Gallie and Vogler, 1994) has shown that unemployed people would rather work at any wage than be unemployed, but this is clearly not the case here. The severe hardship claimants literally could not afford to take such low paid work. This point could well link to the results of other youth studies which have shown that young people who are unemployed (Hutson and Jenkins, 1989) or on training schemes (Hollands, 1990) often receive financial support from others. Such support reduces the young people's reliance on benefit alone and thus encourages them to look for jobs which will make them significantly better off. The extent to which this is possible for the people in my sample will be explored below. Youth Training, while working well for some, is not providing a consistent package of training to all participants and is not able to guarantee employment after the training is completed. Until a more successful system is instituted it will continue to be regarded by employers and trainees alike as cheap labour.

Moving on from Murray's account of the underclass, it has been argued by Mead (1986) that state provision of welfare contributes to the development and sustainment of the underclass - the members of which become unwilling to work through their reliance on state benefits. The employability of such people is thus reduced and this leads to an increased likelihood of long term-state dependency. The evidence above serves to contradict this view. The extent of searching for a job by the interviewees, their optimistic attitudes towards finding work and their optimism and aspirations towards finding a good job show that there is a clear will to work. At no time was being unemployed viewed in a positive light, nor were benefits regarded as comfortable enough to live on. Hence in terms of the underclass debate, these young people can be said to be a part of the group within society who suffer from the fact that there are high levels of unemployment, rather than being seen as socialised into unemployment. Although the sample did not display the flexibility often demonstrated by the unemployed; willing to move to get a job, willing to take any job even if badly paid (Gallie and Vogler, 1994), this must be seen as being a result of their life-cycle position. Initially there is still the belief that a local job can be found but also, importantly, at 16 or 17 there are still likely to be local ties to friends and relations.

In terms of employment, then, the interviewees have suffered as a result of persistently high levels of general unemployment which continue to squeeze out jobs for the young. Youth Training has failed to provide these young people with a viable alternative to employment, it provided no real training and paid little more than benefits. Many of those who have found employment have changed jobs a number of times before their current state of unemployment. There are thus a range of employment based experiences, none of which have led to a secure job. Despite this, job search activity continues, the desire to work persists and there is optimism about future prospects of gaining worthwhile employment.

Family and Money

A common experience of many unemployed people is the need to borrow money on a regular basis, and in particular it has been shown how it is often the family who 'take the strain' in relation to unemployed young people (Hutson and Jenkins, 1989). 'Taking the strain' refers to borrowing money, being given money without expectation of repayment, being bought clothes, using the amenities of the house without any payment and so on. Allat and Yeandle (1992) have noted that families also play a large role in funding job search activities, use of the 'phone, of newspapers, of writing materials and of stamps. Significant here is that this is not a viable option for most of these young people. The extent to which the severe hardship claimants had access to family networks, and/or friends who were able to help them financially or by giving them shelter was addressed in the study.

None of the young people interviewed were living in a family unit with a mother and father (or two legal guardians). The reasons for this varied but for most of the young people there had at some stage been a severe breakdown in the relationship with their parents. Three of the sample were living with a single parent who was also unemployed. Seven were living by themselves in council accommodation, four lived with other people of a similar age and seven had no fixed abode, staying with various friends in no regular pattern. Three of the sample had at some time experienced nights with nowhere to sleep, either walking around all night or sleeping rough. All had at least one parent still alive, 18 out of 21 were no longer living in the family home. Most of the 18 had been thrown out of home by their parents, some had left of their own free will, although in many cases it would appear that the parting was desired by both parties. In general the events which led to being thrown out began with their arrest by the police. Breaking into cars, joy-riding, burglary, and shop-lifting were the crimes in question. The young people felt that they could no longer stay with their families, and the parents were unwilling to support them any further. One young man recounted his experience of leaving his parent's home as follows;

> *well me mam and dad, they was always getting at me, saying to me 'you're just lazy you, you'll not get a job if you don't get up earlier and go out and look for one' and I was looking - why should I get up early? Anyhow, once they found out I was robbing things they just went mad and said to me 'get out and don't come back' so I did.*

Initially friends and relations would help out until they managed to find accommodation of their own. For those still at school, this precipitated a marked decline in performance and commitment. In many respects the event of being arrested is perhaps the single most

important factor which ultimately leads to a young person claiming IS under the severe hardship rule. Of the 21 in the sample 12 had been arrested at least once. In all of these cases the arrest was described as the reason they were thrown out of home. Although no longer living with parents, most still had some sort of contact with them. A much greater level of contact was retained with brothers, sisters and other relatives. None of those who had been thrown out could foresee moving back in with their parents, stating that they preferred to live away from them. There was a tendency for the young men to retain more contact with relatives than for the young women. This seems to be linked to the fact that the young men were still, to a greater extent, dependent on relatives financially. Three of the young men reported going out in the evening with relatives. The independence of living by oneself was reported to outweigh any advantages of living with parents. The three living with a single parent reported that they had a good relationship with their parent.

It is important to discover how money is managed by these young people and to discover what sources there are for borrowing and to what level. Most of those interviewed reported that they were themselves responsible for managing all their finances. It was apparent that all of these young people were on a very tight budget. Borrowing did take place, some of the young women who had friends who were working managed to borrow off them, and indeed lent money to their friends if they could. The young men didn't have a similar source, instead they seemed to rely more on borrowing from relatives, mainly older brothers and sisters but in some cases also aunts, uncles and grandparents. Relatives were rarely used by the young women. Nonetheless the extended family does appear to be playing a role in supporting some of the young unemployed. A few of the young men had regular borrowing arrangements which meant that they were in perpetual debt, paying off a debt with a benefit cheque only to borrow again before the next cheque. In many cases this eventually resulted in some very meagre weeks when little food was bought, indeed this was how those without a borrowing source survived when the money ran out. This is important evidence to refute any 'benefit effect', as is argued by Mead (1986), whereby benefit levels are said to be too high thus discouraging people from taking low paid jobs. Rather than living an easy life on benefits, these young people used a combination of borrowing and going without in order to get by from day-to-day.

Free Time

Far from an being an advantage, having so much unstructured time on one's hands is often cited as one of the worst aspects of being unemployed (Jahoda, 1982). This study is no exception, there was a unanimous dislike of having nothing to do during the day. The following is a brief description of a typical day given by one of the young men;

> *I'd say up at about eleven, get dressed, go downstairs, watch telly for a bit then go out. It's boring. It's basically boring. That's why I can understand why people do the things they do. Get into trouble [with the police] it's just sheer boredom. You go to sleep knowing what you're waking up to sort of thing, which is basically nothing. So basically day in day out it gets a bit boring.*

Interviewees stated that having nothing to do was never regarded as a good thing, not even in the early stages of unemployment. This departs from the findings of Coffield et al (1986) who showed that there was a short period in the early stages of unem-

ployment when young people enjoyed not having to conform to the structures of school or work. The 'free-time' associated with unemployment has been studied by Jahoda (1982). She has proposed that unemployment takes away four important latent functions of work which are that;

- **a** it gives a pattern to daily life and activities to do,
- **b** it provides social contact outside the home,
- **c** it gives a sense of participation in a wider collective purpose,
- **d** it is a source of social status and identity.

An absence of these functions is said to lead to higher levels of stress, and psychological ill health. Jahoda's model does not account for the potential mitigating effects of forming networks with other unemployed people (Jenkins, 1983) or establishing alternative daily routines such as housework and looking for jobs, both of which were found to be important in the lives of most of those interviewed. Getting out of bed after 11am was commonly reported amongst the young men. Most of the young women would get up earlier and do some housework. Indeed housework was the main activity which structured the day for both sexes, both the young men and women reporting significant levels of cleaning, vacuuming and tidying. After doing the housework in the morning the young women would often go out to meet friends. In general, young women were less home-centred than the young men, they would often go out by themselves just for a walk. They also seemed to have a larger circle of friends than most of the young men, this was partly due to having retained more friends from school but they also kept in touch with people they had met in jobs. This contrasts with the work of Griffin (1985) which showed that young unemployed women were likely to stay at home as a result of increased domestic responsibilities and lack of money. The young men would spend much more time in their flat, often watching television, often doing nothing. There were, however, three young men who played football once every week and socialised with some of the other footballers. Thus there is some evidence of establishing routines and strategies to maintain social contact. It is particularly interesting that the young women are more active and socialise more outside their homes than do the young men. This seems to indicate a more resilient response to the potentially isolating features of unemployment. Rarely would anyone go into the centre of Manchester - they simply could not afford the bus fares, and so life was very much centred around their local area. Leisure activities had to be free of cost due to the young people's lack of money. Going out to the pub was a rare occurrence, it happened no more than once a week, if that, and it generally involved going along with someone who was working and could afford to buy the drinks. Coffield et al (1986) noted that being unable to partake in leisure activities which cost money was a key factor in losing contact with friends who had jobs. The findings of this study are in support of that, and few interviewees had social contact with friends who had jobs. Most of the young women visited friends in the evening where they would watch television and talk. Many of the young men's evenings were spent watching television by themselves, although there were some who had regular contact with a group of friends with whom they would socialise. Although alternative activities were developed to fill in the gap left by unemployment, these young people can hardly be said to be enjoying a life of leisure on the dole. For both young men and young women housework appears to be the main activity around which the

day revolves. Apart from this, there is evidence of a gender split in daily activities with the young women being more outgoing and the young men more home centred.

Conclusion

The experiences described above show that claiming income support is far from an easy option for 16 and 17 year olds. It is a highly regulated benefit which requires claimants to regularly re-apply and once in receipt of income support the claimant is still in a severely disadvantaged position. The young people interviewed perceived no benefits in being unemployed, in fact the evidence here shows that there is a strong desire to gain worthwhile full-time employment. The absence of a job or any other regular activity has significant knock-on effects in relation to other spheres of life. Daily routines are established to combat the boredom of unemployment. These young people are in danger of experiencing severe hardship thus their everyday lives are by definition going to be particularly difficult; few can rely on family support mechanisms given that most had been thrown out of the family home, most lived in temporary accommodation, some having experienced sleeping rough. Financial difficulties are mitigated through a combination of borrowing and going without. These young people are, in general, living at a precarious level of meagre subsistence. It would be inappropriate to describe them as having 'chosen' to claim benefits as implied in right wing versions of the underclass theory, they have been forced to do so in the absence of any other viable alternative. These young people believe that employment has a central place in everyday life. They want jobs and are 'actively seeking work'. Far from being idle, work-shy and content with a life on benefits they are frustrated by being unable to support themselves. This frustration is as often directed towards themselves, blaming their lack of effort at school, as it is towards factors beyond their control. Conspicuous by their absence are long-term measures to prevent young people beginning a potential 'career on benefits'. These young people are destined to be the 'under-employed' (Bynner et al, 1991; Beck, 1992), continually drifting in and out of low paid unskilled jobs. The YT, while providing useful entry to employment for many, cannot guarantee places, neither can it guarantee the quality of training received by the trainees. That these young people should be entitled to income support should not be in doubt. There are few jobs, few worthwhile YT places, and there is a desire to work, and yet the government is planning to reduce the amount of severe hardship payments because of the increase in successful applications between 1993 and 1994 (Brindle, 1994). This will have a devastating effect on thousands of young people. Rather than regarding the increase in applications as a purely financial problem the government should be addressing the reasons why it is that so many 16 and 17 year olds are in danger of experiencing severe hardship.

Given the very positive attitude towards work expressed above, these young people's lack of success cannot be regarded as individual failure. The issue is how can young people with few or no qualifications, family problems and often some form of criminal record be brought into the labour force in such a way that they will not quickly drop out of it. The quality of jobs and of training is of key importance here. The terms and conditions of work already experienced by these young people show that it is employer practices that contribute to the fast turnover of unskilled young employees. The introduction of a minimum wage will be of assistance here. It will force employers to regard their workers as more than another aspect of the profit making process. Low

wages may have allowed many businesses to flourish by keeping wage costs down, this has been at the expense of an effective employment policy. With higher wages, the employer has a larger stake in ensuring that an employee can do their job well, hence training will be invested in young workers. This then encourages the employer to retain workers rather than lay them off. Arguments that a minimum wage will remove many unskilled jobs traditionally done by young people are highly questionable given their basis in an 'ideal market' supply and demand curve. For many young people Youth Training has failed to deliver the promise of work based training that will put them in a better position to enter the labour force. Again the reasons lie in unscrupulous employers more interested in increasing profit margins than training young people. The free market has clearly failed to deliver sufficient quality training places to young people, and the (increasingly privatised) TECs have clearly failed to adequately monitor the shoddy practices of many employers. In the free market the bottom line is profit and this will continue to be a lure to some employers seeking to exploit the cheapness of young labour and trainees without providing any useful training. It is practices such as these which must be cracked down upon by central government rather than the so-called 'benefit cheats'.

Acknowledgements
The co-operation of the Manchester Careers Service was crucial to this research, I would like to thank the careers officers who facilitated the research and not least the young people who were interviewed.

I am also very grateful to Ken Roberts, Fiona Devine, Derek Wynne and Andy Steele and the anonymous referees for their comments on earlier drafts. Finally, I would like to thank Tracey Warren for providing copious comments on earlier versions of this paper and for discussing many of the issues that the research raised.

Gary Pollock *is a lecturer in the Department of Sociology at the Manchester Metropolitan University.*

Notes

1 There are a number of exceptions to the restrictions of IS payments to 16 and 17 year olds. Short term entitlement can be granted to those who are registered on a YT place but have yet to start it. Those responsible for a child, or caring for someone who is disabled, and those temporarily sick and thus incapable of work are also eligible. A complete list of exceptions is listed in Roll (1990).

2 The frequency of these interviews in the Manchester Careers offices was fortnightly, it has, however, been pointed out to me that different careers offices use different maximum periods before enquiries are made in relation to stopping the benefit. Newcastle for example use a four week period.

3 All data on Manchester are taken from the Unemployment and Welfare Benefits Bulletin No. 12 produced by the Planning Department of Manchester City Council.

4 International Labour Organisation unemployment rate for 16 to 19 year age group, Spring 1994, using the Labour Force Survey (Employment Gazette 1995).

5 Figures supplied by the Severe Hardship Claims Unit, part of the Benefits Agency, based in Glasgow.

6 High levels of reported job search will partly be due to the fact that these young people should be looking for a job or a YT given that the severe hardship income support is intended as a short term measure.

References;

Allat, P. and Yeandle, S. (1992) *Youth Unemployment and the Family; Voices of Disordered Times,* London: Routledge.

Ashton, D.N. and Field, D. (1976) *Young Workers,* London: Hutchinson.

Ashton, D.N., Maguire, M.J. and Garland, V. (1982) *Youth in the Labour Market,* Research Paper No. 34, London: Department of Employment.

Ashton, D.N., Maguire, M.J., and Spilsbury, M. (1987) 'Labour Market Segmentation and the Structure of the Youth Labour Market' in P. Brown and D.N. Ashton (eds.) *Education, Unemployment and Labour Markets,* London: The Falmer Press.

Banks, M. et al (1992) *Careers and Identities,* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Beck, U. (1992) *Risk Society,* London: Sage.

Blackman, S. (1988) 'Youth Training and the Manpower Services Commission', in H. Lauder and P. Brown, (eds.) *Education in Search of a Future,* London: Falmer Press.

Blackman, S. and Evans, K. (1994) 'Comparative Youth Skill Acquisition in Germany and England: Training as a Process not an Outcome' *Youth and Policy,* No. 43.

Brindle, D. (1994) 'Treasury Plan to Curb Youth Hardship Bill', in *The Guardian,* 2nd June.

Bynner, J. and Roberts, K. (1991) *Youth and Work: transition to employment in England and Germany,* London: Anglo-German Foundation.

CAB Evidence (1992) *Severe Hardship: CAB evidence on young people and benefits,* National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Casson, M. (1979) *Youth Unemployment,* London: Macmillan.

Cameron, C., Lush, A. and Meara, G. (1943) *Disinherited Youth,* Edinburgh: Carnegie Trust.

Chisolm, L. and du Bois-Reymond, M. (1993) 'Youth transitions, Gender and Social Change' *Sociology,* Vol. 27, No. 2.

Cockburn, C. (1991) *In the Way of Women,* London: Macmillan.

Coffield, F., Borril, C. and Marshall, S. (1983) 'How Young People Try to Survive Being Unemployed', *New Society,* 2nd June.

Coffield, F., Borril, C. and Marshall, S. (1986) *Growing up at the Margins,* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Collinson, M. and Collinson, D. (1996) ''It's Only Dick': The Sexual Harassment of Women Managers in Insurance Sales', *Work, Employment and Society,* Vol. 10, No. 1.

Employment Gazette, (1995) January Issue, London: Department of Employment.

Finn, D. (1987) *Training Without Jobs: New Deals and Broken Promises,* London: Macmillan.

Furlong, A. (1987) 'Coming to Terms with the Declining Demand for Youth Labour' in P. Brown and D.N. Ashton (eds.) *Education, Unemployment and Labour Markets,* London: The Falmer Press.

Furlong, A. (1990) 'Labour Market Segmentation and the Age Structuring of Employment Opportunities for Young People', *Work, Employment and Society,* Vol. 4, No. 2.

Furlong, A. (1992) *Growing Up in a Classless Society?* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Gallie, D. (1994) 'Are the Unemployed an Underclass? Some Evidence from the Social Change and Economic Life Initiative', *Sociology,* Vol. 28, No. 3.

Gallie, D. and Vogler, C. (1994) 'Unemployment and Attitudes to Work' in D. Gallie, C. Marsh and C. Vogler (eds.) *Social Change and the Experience of Employment,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Griffin, C. (1985) *Typical Girls? Young Women From School to the Job Market,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hollands, R.G. (1990) *The Long Transition: Class, Culture and Youth Training,* London: Macmillan.

Hutson, S. and Jenkins, R. (1989) *Taking the Strain; families, unemployment and the transition to adulthood,* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Jahoda, M. (1982) *Employment and Unemployment: A Social-Psychological Analysis,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jenkins, R. (1983) *Lads, Citizens and Ordinary Kids,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Jewkes, J. and Winterbottom, A. (1933) *Juvenile Unemployment,* London: Allen and Unwin.

Jones, G. and Wallace, C. (1992) *Youth, Family and Citizenship,* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Lofland, J. (1971) *Analysing Social Settings,* Belmont: Wadsworth.

McLaughlin, E. Millar, J. and Cook, K. (1989) *Work and Welfare Benefits,* Aldershot: Avebury.

Manchester City Council (1994) *Unemployment and Welfare Benefits Bulletin,* No. 12, Planning Department.

Mead, L.M. (1986) *Beyond Entitlement: The Social Obligations of Citizenship,* New York: Free Press.

Meara, G. (1936) *Juvenile Unemployment in South Wales,* Cardiff: Cardiff University Press.

Mizen, P. (1995) *The State, Young People and Youth Training,* London: Mansel.

MORI (1991) *Severe Hardship Payments: A survey of 16 and 17 year olds,* Department of Social Security.

Murray, C (1990) *The Emerging British Underclass,* London: Institute for Economic Affairs.

Pahl, R.E. (1984) *Divisions of Labour,* London: Basil Blackwell.

Parker, H.J. (1974) *View From the Boys; A Sociology of Down Town Adolescents,* London: David and Charles.

Patrick, J. (1973) *A Glasgow Gang Observed,* London: Eyre Methuen.

Raffe, D. and Smith, P. (1987) 'Young People's Attitudes to YTS: The First Two Years', *British Educational Research Journal,* Vol.13 No. 3.

Roberts, K. (1984) *School Leavers and Their Prospects,* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Roberts, K., Clark, S.C. and Wallace, C. (1994) 'Flexibility and Individualism: A Comparison of Transitions into Employment in England and Germany', *Sociology,* Vol. 28, No. 1.

Roberts, K. and Parsell, G. (1989) *The Stratification of Youth Training,* ESRC 16-19 Initiative Occasional Paper, No. 11, London: City University.

Roll, J. (1990) *Young People: Growing Up in the Welfare State,* Family Policy Studies Centre, Occasional Paper No. 10.

Sinfield, A. (1995) 'The Further Decline and Fall of Unemployment Insurance' in *Benefits,* Issue 12.

Wallace, C. (1987) *For Richer For Poorer, Growing Up In and Out of Work,* London: Tavistock Publications.

White, M. and McRae, S. (1989) *Young Adults and Long Term Unemployment,* London: Policy Studies Institute.

Willis, P. (1977) *Learning to Labour,* Farnborough: Saxon House.

Wilson, W.J. (1987) *The Truly Disadvantaged,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

the ART dEPARTmENT

design and print

Corporate Image
Promotional Material
Business Stationery
Advertisements
Newsletters
Journals

The Art Department
1 Pink Lane · Newcastle upon Tyne · NE1 5DW
Telephone Number: (0191) 230 4164 *· Fax Number: (0191) 222 1235*

WORKING SPACE

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND

Starting Out in Detached Work

MATT VAUGHAN

Abstract
This 'Working Space' concerns a youth worker's first few months in post, starting out in his first full time post as a detached worker one scorching hot summer in a popular seaside town in the North of England. He found himself isolated, not only as a single worker for a new project established by a voluntary management committee, but also the first worker to be appointed to work in a purely 'detached' style within that County. Matt encountered a variety of expectations, reactions and frustrations that he did not expect to find. Here is his account.

Starting out...
So there I was one gloriously hot afternoon walking up and down the sea front for the umpteenth time, feeling ill on my fourth ice cream, desperately trying to spot groups of young people and fit into the surroundings, remembering all I'd learnt about participant observation. Everyone I seemed to muster enough courage to talk to happened to be on a day trip and definitely thought me a little suspect. If they didn't actually tell me where to go you could see it in their eyes.

Suddenly my reconnaissance was interrupted and my stomach heaved, not from the ice cream or, for that matter, the chips or the crab sticks but being grabbed mercilessly by a middle aged woman in a bright red hat.

'Hullo Auntie', I exclaimed flushing to an extreme shade of red. Introductions and explanations over, I found myself being dragged off by my Aunt and her friends to look at a 'bad lot' who were hanging about one of the many chippies. 'Oh', I muttered trying to pull away 'they're from Rotherham'. They were another group on yet another day trip. My Aunt and her chums were stupefied. You could see the puzzlement on their faces asking themselves what it was I was actually doing for my monthly pay cheque.

I bore no malice to their lack of comprehension. I was getting accustomed to misunderstandings from everyone. Take my Management Committee for example - now there was a right cocktail of demand and expectation! If I hadn't been appointed to 'bring the young people of our town to the Lord' I'd come to 'spread the impact of detached work across the county'. Or, to others my job was about 'putting criminal behaviour out of fashion with the town's young folk'. All this from people who'd spent years raising the finance needed in order to establish the project. All this from people who wanted visible results.

Two weeks into the job, one management meeting over and the pressure had begun. Where and who had I got to know, what were they up to and would they be coming to church on Sunday? Forget the youth work literature on the need for 'reconnaissance' and slow build up over a number of months. These people wanted value for money and weren't going to let me forget it.

By the end of the first month I was no more encouraged. I had my share of being laughed at and spat at and felt isolated in every way. Receiving my first pay cheque with 'you lucky man!' written on the back brought tears to my eyes.

There and then I should have stood up for myself, recognised my own self worth and spelt it out to the management committee. They would need to be patient and think through their perceptions of the work. I didn't. I turned on myself as if somehow I wasn't doing right despite all the written stuff on detached work saying I was doing fine. Here support from another detached worker would have been valuable. I should have got some.

What support I did receive came from friends whom I had gone to college with. Daily calls sharing troubles and boosting confidences, fired up my guts and enthusiasm, 'Three months', I thought, 'I'll give it three months'. I was still insuring myself for failure. As I set off on my evening sessions I began to rehearse lines for my C.V. excusing my false start into the world of full-time detached work.

Pride played its part. It kept me going through the crowds and noises of the sea front. I was determined to do my best even if I was to give up after three months. 'I will get to know that group, contacts will become relationships', I gritted, drumming it into my head. I began to realise that if I kept up my frantic schedule, being too keen, I would get nowhere. I slowed down my walks taking more in and started to concentrate on one or two areas of contact. This began to bring small but important dividends. More self-assured and hopeful I would return to these contacts regularly. Sometimes they would be the only source of optimism on a whole session. Sometimes they wouldn't even be around.

This optimism that occasionally began to soothe me had a knock on effect with the faces I was getting to know and nod to. Perhaps the absence of the worrying scowl that hadn't left my face in the first month had gone and made me more approachable. Perhaps the fact that the crowds on the sea front were at last getting thinner, the evenings drawing in and the winds and rain returning was making people greet me more readily.

Amid the drones and shrills of the video machine and the thud of the pool ball, I began to slowly but surely build up a small cluster of regular opponents. They began to believe that this blond bloke who said he was a youth worker maybe was genuine. Perhaps he wasn't from the C.I.D. or a pervert!

By September, my third month, certain arcades were becoming favourite hang-outs. The crowds had mostly gone and each session saw many of the same faces returning to play on the amusements or loiter about the stairways. I remained patient - something I find hard to do. I was dying to bluster into the groups and prove how alright a bloke I was. I stuck to the regular small disparate group who were beginning to accept me. Now and again a new face would join us extending my range of contacts. To become part of a scene takes time. When you've been around long enough people do accept and approach. The nods grew to patter which in turn became conversation which I tried to structure.

By the end of September I was quietly confident that I was in a position to propose a day away, doing whatever my new acquaintances desired as long as it was constructive. It was time to dangle a carrot. We met the next day, my first visitors to my little office base. They had an idea, we arranged it together and it went ahead.

That was the beginning of a familiar pattern that youth workers of all styles have seen develop into effective and not-so-effective workings with young people. I'd soon forgotten about my three month time limit as I at last began to enjoy the knock on effect of carrot-dangling. By New Year I had become, in all honesty, a trusted credible face on the sea front.

As workings improved so too did relations with the Management Committee. Through my constant emphasis of the deprivation of many young people, management idealism came closer to realism. I got better at standing up for myself and even succeeded in getting them to go on a couple of management courses. The Area Youth Officer proved to be a valuable ally in this metamorphosis.

Initial despair at the magnitude of the scale of expectation placed upon me nearly ruined everything. I learnt to deal with the pressure of unrealistic demands in my own self-absorbed way when I should have put my foot firmly down. I should have demanded non-managerial supervision immediately and challenged management expectations. Instead I got through relying on pride and faith in my own ability. A new worker working alone shouldn't have to grit his or her teeth and muddle through, anxious to please, particularly when they face vulnerability on the streets. If there has to be a single worker situation in a detached project then for the worker's sake get management responsibilities and attitudes right.

Matt Vaughan *now works as a youth worker in Nottingham.*

ADVERTISING RATES AND DATA

CIRCULATION

Youth & Policy is issued quarterly. It has a circulation of 1,000 not only throughout the United Kingdom and Europe, but also as far afield as the USA and Australia. Many academics and professionals subscribe to what has proven to be a valuable contribution to those involved in various forms of youth study and youth work.

RATES

Advertisements *(where finished artwork is supplied)*

Full Page	£160
Half Page (landscape only)	£80
Inserts	Price negotiable

Where other journals wish to place advertisements or inserts in Youth and Policy, we would be open to negotiation.

MECHANICAL DATA

Full Page	113mm wide x 182mm deep
Half Page	113mm wide x 89mm deep

COPY REQUIREMENTS

Artwork format:	Bromide/PMT
Screen:	133dpi

Advertisements can also be generated by our graphics department. We require a bromide or PMT of your logo, any other logos, photographs and copy you wish to be included in your display. Please specify typeface where exact match is needed. Price subject to examination of copy.

FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT

Lucy Ford (Promotions)
Youth & Policy
10 Lady Beatrice Terrace
New Herrington
Houghton le Spring
DH4 4NE, England

REVIEWS

IN THIS ISSUE

Tim May and Anthony A Vass
Working With Offenders : Issues, Contexts and Outcomes
Sage Publications 1996
ISBN 0-8039-7621-6 (hbk)
ISBN 0-8039-7622-4 (pbk)
£12.95 (pbk)
pp 265

Andrew Stables
Subjects of Choice:
The Process and Management of Pupil and Student Choice
Cassell Education: London 1996
ISBN 0-304-32928-2 (pbk)
pp 239

Ron Davie and David Galloway (eds)
Listening to Children in Education
David Fulton Publishers 1996
ISBN 1-85346-314-0
£12.99 (pbk)
pp 154

Morwenna Griffiths and Carol Davies
In Fairness to Children
David Fulton Publishers 1996
ISBN 1-85346-341-8
£13.99 (pbk)
pp 217

Morag MacSween
Anorexic bodies; a Feminist and Sociological Perspective on Anorexia Nervosa
Routledge 1995
ISBN 0-415-02846-9 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-02847-7 (pbk)

Clive R. Hollin, Kevin J. Epps and David J. Kendrick
Managing Behavioural Treatment:
Policy and Practice with Delinquent adolescents
Routledge 1995
ISBN 0-415-05005-7 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-05006-5 (pbk)
pp xi + 205

Kate Hill
The Long Sleep : Young People And Suicide
Virago 1995
ISBN 1-85381-589-6
£9.99 (pbk)
pp 268

Colin Pritchard
Suicide - The Ultimate Rejection? A Psycho-Social Study
Open University Press 1995
ISBN 0-335-19032-4
pp 209

Helen Cowie and Sonia Sharp
Peer Counselling in Schools: A Time to Listen
David Fulton Publishers 1996
ISBN 1-85346-367-1
£13.99 (pbk)
pp 144

Terry Irving, David Maunders, Geoff Sherington
Youth in Australia : Policy Administration and Politics
MacMillan 1995
ISBN 0-7329-1920-7
A$74.95 (hbk)
A$36.95 (pbk)
pp 398

Ben Whitney
The Truth about Truancy
Kogan Page 1994
ISBN 0-7494-1416-2
£14.95
pp 130

Edith Le Riche
Combating Truancy in Schools; Listening to the Voice of the Pupil
David Fulton in association with The Roehampton Institute 1995
ISBN 1-85346-337-X
£11.99
pp 101

B. Gardiner and B. Thompson (eds)
A.W.O.L. Factors Affecting School Attendance
City of Sunderland Education Dept. and Save the Children 1995
ISBN 1-870322-79-7
£9.75
pp 70

REVIEWS

Mark Griffiths
Adolescent Gambling
Routledge 1995
ISBN 0-415-05834-1
£14.99 (pbk)
pp 304

Alf Ronnby
Mobilizing Local Communities
Avebury
ISBN 1-85972-189-3
£49.50 (hbk)
pp 375

Sarah Irwin
Rights of Passage, Social Change and the Transition from Youth to Adulthood
UCL Press
ISBN 1-85728-429-1 (hbk)
ISBN 1-85728-430-5 (pbk)
£35.00 (hbk)
£12.95 (pbk)

Ross A. Thompson
Preventing Child Maltreatment through Social Support : A Critical Analysis
Sage 1995
ISBN 0-803-95595-2
£16.50 (pbk)
pp 224

Linda Winkley
Emotional Problems in Children and Young People
Cassell 1996
ISBN 0-304-32569-4
pp 328

Matthew Colton, Charlotte Drury, Margaret Williams
Staying Together : Supporting Families under the Children Act
Arena 1995
ISBN 1-85742-265-1 (pbk)
ISBN 1-85742-264-3 (hbk)
£12.95 (pbk)
pp123

Ruth Sinclair and Roger Grimshaw
Planning and Reviewing Under the Children Act
National Children's Bureau
ISBN 1-874579-57-1
£14.50 (pbk)
pp 126

Mark Drakeford and Maurice Vanstone (Eds)
Beyond Offending Behaviour
ISBN 1 85742 238 4 (hbk)
ISBN 1 85742 239 2 (pbk)
£32.50 (hbk)
£14.95 (pbk)
pp123

Keith Popple
Analysing Community Work : Its Theory and Practice
Open University Press 1995
ISBN 0-335-19408-7
pp 131

Walter Forde
Growing Up In Ireland - The Development of Irish Youth Services
Kara Publications, Wexford, Ireland 1995

Malcolm Payne
Linkages - Effective Networking in Social Care
Whiting & Birch Ltd
Human Sciences Publishers
ISBN 1-871177-34-0

Alan Dearling and Howie Armstrong
with cartoons by Gubby
World Youth Games
Russel House Publishing Ltd
ISBN 1-89824-50-3
£9.95

Gilbert J. Botvin, Steven Schinke, Mario A. Orlandi (eds)
Drug Abuse Prevention with Multiethnic Youth
Sage Publications 1995
ISBN 0-8039-5712-2
£21.59 (pbk)
pp 359

Kimberley K. Leonard, Carl E. Pope and William H. Feyerherm (eds)
Minorities in Juvenile Justice
Sage 1995
ISBN 0 8039 7265 2
£17.50 (pbk)
pp 240

SHORT CUTS

Tyrell Burgess, Michael Locke, John Pratt and Nick Richards
Degrees East: The Making of the University of East London 1892-1992
Athlone 1995
ISBN 0-485-12092-5
£9.95
pp 282

John Harland, Kay Kinder and Kate Hartley
Arts in their View: A study of youth participation in the rts
NFER 1995
ISBN 0-7005-1369-8
£10.00
pp 296
Available from NFER Publications,
The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2DQ

Philip Kasinitz
Metropolis: Centre and symbol of our times
Macmillan 1995
ISBN 0-333-62127-1
£15.99
pp 498

Stanford M. Lyman (ed)
Social Movements: Critiques, concepts, case studies
Macmillan 1995
ISBN 0-333-62019-4
£15.99
pp 462

Howard Parker, Fiona Measham, Judith Aldridge
Drugs Futures: Changing patterns of drug use amongst English youth.
ISBN 0-948-83023-9
£15.00
pp 30
Available ISDD, 32-36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EC

Tim May and Anthony A Vass
Working With Offenders : Issues, Contexts and Outcomes
Sage Publications 1996
ISBN 0-8039-7621-6 (hbk)
ISBN 0-8039-7622-4 (pbk)
£12.95 (pbk)
pp 265

DEBORAH MARSHAL

'Working With Offenders' is a collection of articles divided into three parts : Issues, Contexts and Outcomes. In part I the issues that inform practice range from training, skills and competencies, anti-discriminatory practice, autonomy and accountability, masculinity and the causes of crime.

Part II examines the contexts in which work with offenders takes place, looking at probation committees, legislation, pre-sentence reports, community penalties, prison and the community.

Part III concludes with an exploration of the outcomes of good practice, focusing on the development of partnerships against crime, efficiency and effectiveness and an evaluation of crime prevention and broader methods of intervention.

The book is intended for students and practitioners to enable them to evaluate knowledge in relation to practice. As a practitioner I found it helpful and illuminating to find all the key debates and issues, together with some summaries of available research and evidence, in one volume.

The Probation Service, perhaps more than other public sector organisations, has increasingly found itself in the 'eye of the storm,' subject more and more to the central control of the Home Office, itself seemingly paralysed by the Home Secretary whose main policy, or rather slogan of 'prison works' has sacrificed rational debate and response to crime for populist support and political expedience.

Working in probation for over fifteen years it is necessary to stand back from practice to understand it better; working with offenders provides just that opportunity. The effect is only partly uplifting; the overall impact is more one of confusion, anger and real concern for the future of the Probation Service faced with is latest but perhaps biggest challenge so far, the threat of deprofessionalisation following the recent decision to remove the requirement for a social work qualification as a condition of entry into the Probation Service. A rearguard action is being fought to retain some form of externally validated, higher education qualification instead of the internally based NVQ (training on the job) route the Home Secretary favours.

Against this background, Nellis' chapter on probation training that opens this collection of articles is highly topical, providing a useful analysis of events leading up to the publication of the infamous DEW's Report in 1994, which proposed employment-based training linked to NVQs.

CCETSW's culpability and failure to address some valid criticisms levelled at generic DipSW courses in particular that they failed to address key probation issues and identify a distinctive probation value base which the author suggests should be founded on anti-custodialism, restorative justice and community safety is noted. Nellis concludes optimistically by acknowledging that the demise of genericism and a move to specialist training is not necessarily bad providing critical knowledge informs practice, and that training stays in higher education.

Gwyneth Boswell's research-based chapter on the essential skills of probation work provides a clear and refreshing alternative agenda to the competence-based route to which probation practice is apparently doomed, with its interminable lists of skills and mechanistic approach.

Boswell proposes that the art of self-motivating and self-evaluation be taught to probation students who could then apply these techniques to a small set of core skills, which are derived from her research of what probation officers themselves consider are the fundamental skills, knowledge and qualities required to perform their job; an unsurprising but understandable and practical catalogue:

- communication skills;
- assessment skills;
- intervention skills;
- oral and written skills;
- relating theory to practice;
- ability to form professional relationships;
- workload management skills;
- use of self.

Denney's chapter on discrimination and anti-discrimination in probation is written in the sort of inaccessible style and jargon that discredits and obscures this very important issue. Indeed, this process started with the publication of CCETSW's Paper 30. Much damage was done under the vociferous accusations of political correctness levelled at CCETSW, which functioned to deflect much valid and necessary attention away from the subject and which regrettably led to a downgrading of ADP issues on the revised DipSW programme. The chapter concludes with a range of proposals that seeks to take the debate beyond the counting and categorising that has characterised many Probation Services' responses to ADP issues, but remains rather weak on examples of good practice.

Finklesteen's account of the growth of Home Office control and the threat to the traditional autonomy of probation officers because of the growing requirements of accountability, as exemplified by the introduction of National Standards, is well written and accessible. He reminds us that a proper exercise of accountability can provide consistency and quality assurance, which underpin anti-discriminatory practice.

Buckley explores the concept of masculinity and its relevance to offending behaviour. In what is a challenging and thought provoking chapter, she

makes a good case for an analysis of offending behaviour based on an understanding of masculinity. The fact this hasn't happened is attributed to a system designed by men for men '...accompanied by a great deal of macho rhetoric'. From 'short, sharp shock' to punishment in the community the language is that of the successful boys' public school. Regarding the Probation Service as the conscience of the Criminal Justice System the author urges management not to bully staff because it is bullied, but to stick to the Service's beliefs and values and find other ways to work demandingly, creatively and illuminately, rather than opting for more control, more packages and '...more illusions that probation is a hard and punishing option'. I was persuaded that we do need an alternative agenda and approach.

Part II begins with Holdaway's research-based account of the role of the Probation Committees in policy development and oversight of the Service's work. It may be news to students that the magistrate-dominated committees are led rather than leaders, acting more as lay monitors and a 'sounding board' for chief officers, but it is rather obvious stuff for those of us in probation.

More discursive is Smith's chapter on pre-sentence reports, charting the history of their changing nature from pleas of mercy to offence-focused documents, mirroring the wider debates about crime and criminality through their evolution.

Echoing the debate about competencies, Smith concludes that probation officers will need to demonstrate moral commitment rather than mere competence to guarantee their survival in a hostile climate. 'It is this combination of ethical clarity, critical knowledge and practical skill which social workers writing PSRs have to achieve if social work with offenders is to survive in the present hostile environment'.

Vass' contribution to the effectiveness debate is extremely topical and provides a useful summary of available research at home and abroad, which is at best equivocal and at worst positively misleading. The conclusion that the growth of community penalties have functioned as 'wider, stronger and different nets' or put another way, rather than providing alternatives to prison, they have become synonymous with the expansion of penal control and high prison rates, is questioned by the author. Findings have been generalised inappropriately to other contexts and countries, tending to mask some real successes. However, the main argument of this chapter is a convincing one - that prison rates are related to policy, politics and the media. Within this context community penalties cannot resolve what is essentially a 'policy crisis'. The government is rightly blamed for the inconsistencies and irrationality of the system. Vass urges greater study of the 'science of government' which is regarded as the social problem that has hitherto remained unnoticed and uninvestigated.

The chapter on probation work in prison reviews the changing context of throughcare work and concludes that it can only work when the prison system is relatively stable - this as we know it certainly is not.

The final part of the book is devoted to outcomes. Broad takes us through the fairly recent partnership agenda for the Probation Service and regrets their small scale nature so far; they could be greater and better. This is rather unfair criticism. It is early days and I feel the Probation Service's partnership work is one of its potential successes for the future.

Probation involvement in crime prevention as described by Gilling has a longer though rather confused history, which is illustrated by an account of the Kirkholt Project, regarded as a blueprint for the Safer Cities Programme. Gilling offers a rational model for the Probation Service's tertiary crime prevention work with offenders to inform and be influenced by primary and secondary crime prevention initiatives undertaken by other agencies.

For me the book ends on a high note with Raynor's chapter on the rehabilitation of effectiveness. For the Probation Service to survive it must demonstrate effectiveness and therefore reclaim valuable ground lost in the 'Nothing Works' era. Knowledge is becoming available of successful initiatives and Raynor outlines the key ingredients based on the available research. Some key lessons from West Glamorgan's Service-wide implementation of their STOP programme (straight thinking on probation), based on the Canadian Reasoning and Rehabilitation programme, are outlined, and offer real encouragement that a management-led, carefully planned and research-based initiative carefully monitored and evaluated can bring about the necessary change in working culture, which emphasises quality and effectiveness.

To survive, we must, as Raynor urges, develop 'a culture of curiosity' - and we had better do this quick.

Deborah Marshall *is a Senior Probation Officer with Northumbria Probation Service.*

Andrew Stables
Subjects of Choice:
The Process and Management of Pupil and Student Choice
Cassell Education: London 1996
ISBN 0-304-32928-2 (pbk)
pp 239

GWENDA RHIAN JONES

This book seeks to make sense of the way young people choose their educational subjects and courses at crucial stages of development, at 14, 16 and 18. Discourse analysis is used to assess pupils/students' perceptions of the process at work and is specifically aimed to be of assistance to curriculum planners, teachers and management.

The framework of the book is structured into six sections; the first three explore choices at 14, 16 and 18. The final three focus upon issues relating

to gender, the management of curriculum choice and a general discussion on the importance of the role of choice in education.

'Subject' choice at 14 is based on the author's own research of 13 comprehensive, mixed and single-sex schools in distinct localities in South West England in 1984. Methodology is largely based on questionnaires and interviews, focusing upon pupil choice rather than of being the sole responsibility of teachers and parents.

The author follows Gaskell (1984) in his definition of choice. Choice is defined as the 'active' and conscious involvement of pupils/students in determining which subjects to follow. In addition, other influences such as peer, family and school pressure can affect the process of choice. Certain problems of allowing relatively free choice at 14 are highlighted (p56). Suggestions to schools are made e.g. a variety of staff to advise pupils, advice needs to be monitored carefully and consistently. Moreover, teachers need an awareness of the danger of giving conflicting advice. The research findings are then compared to the National Curriculum. According to Stables, the National Curriculum offers a 'neater, more limited, more uniform... and lacks some of the potential for gender division' (p63) version of the old system. Further to the Dearing Report of 1993, options were extended, so the National Curriculum 'develops the best of both worlds'.

Recent years have seen the growth of full-time education at 16 plus. Here, research is based on an 'academically selective' sample of 209 first year A-level students at a tertiary college in 1991. Research findings are analysed chronologically and at times this is burdensome. Emphasis is placed on the misleading assumptions of students to make choices on their previous experiences of subjects.

Disappointing and limited is the author's chapter on vocational alternatives to the A-level and subject choice at 18 plus. A general discussion of some of the tendencies is given, but the work is not based on the author's research, which is a weakness.

Gender issues in subjects of choice are assessed in Section 4. Certain gendered differences are emphasised. Modern languages are preferred by girls, and they are generally less confident about the process of choice. The fact that girls are more uncertain about their roles in society is offered as an explanation of their uncertainty with subject choice. Emphasis is also given on the problem general research has in differentiating between the importance of class, ethnicity and gender as causal factors of choice (p146). These are all inter-related cultural factors which affect choice. Stables neglects these factors in his own research, apart from gender. Consequently, the work remains limited in scope. The problem of defining equality and freedom of choice are discussed in Chapter 16 and we are given a timely reminder of viewing students as consumers rather than products.

The degree to which school ethos affects subject choice is examined in Section 5 and the planning and managing of choice stresses the importance

of future adaptability and breadth of choice. Some broader considerations discuss the flexibility of modular choices and the need for linkages between vocational and academic subjects to 'foster individual flexibility, reflexivity and initiative' (p220).

The value of the book lies in its appeal and specialisation in education planning at 14 and 16.

Gwenda Rhian Jones, *School of Sociology & Social Policy, University of Wales BANGOR.*

Ron Davie and David Galloway (eds)
Listening to Children in Education
David Fulton Publishers 1996
ISBN 1-85346-314-0
£12.99 (pbk)
pp 154

Morwenna Griffiths and Carol Davies
In Fairness to Children
David Fulton Publishers 1996
ISBN 1-85346-341-8
£13.99 (pbk)
pp 217

TED HARVEY

These two books occupy an interesting position in relation to the dominant official ideology in education. While, as far as I know, no official national curriculum documents actually advocate not listening to children (though a few politicians might I suspect), and equal opportunities is indeed given a cursory mention, these concepts are hardly central planks of present policy and may be more in conflict with it if the truth be known.

'Listening to Children' explores the historical and legal background of listening, the voice of the child in school in general and with specific reference to special educational needs. There is some interesting material here, could the requirement in the 1989 Children Act that the voice of the child be heard be similarly incorporated in the education system? Not easily it would seem when, in one survey quoted here of 115 primary and secondary teachers, less than a third reported taking any account of the views of their pupils.

The difficulties in adopting a listening approach are explored in some depth as are the reasons for doing so, including improvements in behaviour as well as more philosophical justifications. Some of these difficulties are to do with the traditional nature of schools and the training of teachers which are clearly portrayed in the early chapters, others are to do with a climate

where even teachers themselves are not listened to and the emphasis is on academic goals rather than social ones.

'In Fairness to Children' is a rather different animal in many ways although dealing with a similar theme. Here we have a quite personal account of an action research project undertaken by a primary school classroom teacher and a University researcher and lecturer based on the topic of fairness. The whole book is based on the work undertaken with one teacher's classes in one school. We are given an account of the activities undertaken, the thinking behind them, the children's reactions and the sometimes painful reflection on the associated issues.

It is fascinating to discover how quickly the commitment to the concept of fairness moves from a concern with the ways in which certain groups - girls, ethnic minorities, and the working class - can be disadvantaged in the classroom, to an awareness of the need to empower all of the children, bringing in such concepts as self identity and self-esteem. In fact, in speculating as to just what effects a day trip to Warwick Castle has on the various members of the class the authors come close to undermining many of the current notions of curriculum planning and delivery - the responses of individual children from different backgrounds and life histories to the imaginative possibilities presented by life in a medieval castle are likely to be varied and unpredictable in terms of pupils' social, emotional and personal development rather than the learning of names and dates.

Both of these books are courageous attempts to explore educational issues which are distinctly unfashionable, at least in official terms, at the present time. In this sense it is hard to be critical of them, from my point of view they represent an approach to education which is desperately needed to counteract the current philistinism in what passes for educational debate. However I feel it is necessary to make some observations which are more concerned with what is left out rather than what has been put in.

Both are concerned with the internal motivation of children, with ways in which they can grow and develop into individuals who have control over their own lives, this is in stark contrast to the current, albeit resisted, controlling orthodoxy of exam results and inspections. It is perilously close to the child-centred philosophy reputedly endemic in the sixties and so consistently derided by the present government and, it seems to me, as assiduously avoided by the opposition. While the authors in their own ways acknowledge these tensions I would like to know in more depth and detail to what extent they believe the approaches they advocate can be 'bolted on' to more conventional provision or if, and how, they might replace it.

Linked to this is the possible inadequacy of both the analysis and prescription of these texts. While fairness and listening are pivotal concepts in a truly empowering education, I suspect they will not cut much ice without a more penetrating analysis and fuller philosophical and psychological foundation. I was disappointed with the omission from both books of mentions of works by people such as Michelle Bauber and Haim Ginott and even Carl Rogers in America or by Murray White and Jenny Mosley in the U.K, who have all

developed practical and systematic approaches to these issues supported by a clear theoretical basis.

I certainly hope these books reach a wide audience, many people will find something helpful and inspiring from them, as important marks on a much wider canvas they have much to recommend them.

Ted Harvey *is Assistant Warden at Impington Village College near Cambridge.*

Morag MacSween
Anorexic bodies; a Feminist and Sociological Perspective on Anorexia Nervosa
Routledge 1995
ISBN 0-415-02846-9 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-02847-7 (pbk)

SIOBHAN WALSH

This book is well presented, written and is very interesting to any reader who wants to find out more about anorexia. The writer explores anorexia from a historical and sociological approach. The book details psychological, pathological, sociobiological and feminist approaches. It highlights to the reader the limitations of such approaches.

The book serves as a valuable introduction to the subject of anorexia both to sufferers who want to read up about the disorder and professionals in training. In addition it is useful for professionals who want updated literature. I found it a good preliminary resource for my own work on women with eating disorders.

At the beginning of the book, MacSween explores psychiatric explanations of anorexia. She identifies the pitfalls via meaning i.e. how psychiatry failed to explore the social significance of food, appetite, hunger and such like concepts. In her review of psychiatric explanations and of other points of view on anorexia, I was able to grip the foundations of each approach and in turn appreciate the limitations that MacSween talks about. For example, MacSween argues that psychiatric explanations are based on a culture that is 'normalised'. Desires are therefore viewed as defective, requiring little if any analysis.

MacSween attempts to ground anorexia in both a feminist and fully sociological perspective. In her overview of feminist theory, she does not undermine and reject, but rather deepens and develops. She contends that anorexia is a struggle between the ideologies of individualism and feminism. Her critique of Chernin, Lawrence and Orbach et al is not destructive but rather constructive. She argues that the mother-daughter relationship (strongly emphasised upon by Chernin), ignores many social implications in that by curing the mother-daughter relationship will not cure anorexia. Its far more deep. Desire

and dependence as concepts within feminist theory are limited due to the incomplete exploration of social constructions.

MacSween outlines the significance of meanings in anorexia. Her phenomenological approach is complementary to the analysis of anorexia. She identifies and explores the double battle of anorexia, that it is not just a case of getting thin, but getting thinner. Through qualitative research she is able to draw on both the positive and negative aspects of anorexia from the point of view of the sufferer.

In the chapter 'The sociology of the body', she articulates the early grand theories of the body by investigating the historical concepts of the body and of the self i.e. within feudal and carnival culture. For MacSween the disciplines can inform one another, there is a need for them to interact.

MacSween is critical of the medical approach, asserting that its response facilitates the social control of women. Her approach is evidence of Marxist feminism. The history behind western culture is relative to the history behind anorexia. MacSween's view of the Victorian age is enlightening. The feminine body is understood in the context of male 'property' rights. In a partriarchal bourgeois culture, the feminine body is understood as draining masculine active energies. Interpreted as keeping men from production, success and wealth. Medicine reflected research done by men, for men, hence the 'hysterectomy', a result of labelling a desiring female as 'hysterical'. Definitions of 'normal' and 'abnormal' serve political and ideological functions. In response to Anorexic women, the medical model does not relieve but rather oppresses the anorexic. Hospitalisation strips away the carefully created and maintained control of the body and eating. Anorexic women therefore become the object of an external force.

Because of her historical approach, MacSween's analysis of twentieth century bodies is comprehensible. She articulates the fine distinction between having and being a body, a concept that is not thoroughly understood by sociobiologists, leaving the individuality of embodiment largely left unexplored. Again socio-biology like other disciplines, naturalises the male body as the unanalysed norm. Female difference is assessed in the context of male normality.

MacSween raises awareness of the significance attached to meanings. For her, meanings are internalised by anorexic women. Her object - subject approach is interesting. The female is depicted as an object, as stimulus for male desire. Femininity has been moulded by male culture. The contradictions within this culture are complex. Dichotomies battle themselves out in the body. A strong feature of this book is the emphasis on sexuality. Sexuality is based on the understanding of man as subject and female as object. Because this still persists today, sexual liberation does not mean sexual autonomy. The female body as a concept operates in patriarchal bourgeois culture through the concepts of object, discipline and chaos. MacSween addresses these concepts within anorexia. The anorexic female becomes the object of the appetite that she aimed to eliminate.

Desire is the essence for MacSween. The body and appetite are transformed in an attempt to eradicate desire. Food and eating are defined as alien, viewed as feeding desire. Anorexia is an attempt to resolve contradictions; the body as the 'shell' is an absolute barrier against absorbing desire. The shell offers protection against the consumer self. Pathological theories disregard desire. The struggle with desire for food is overlooked yet as MacSween argues, it is central in anorexia. MacSween is convincing in her argument that anorexia is a disease of desire and presentation.

MacSween touches on the limitations of the feminist approach. Whereas feminists argue that the home is the primary location of social control, MacSween argues otherwise, asserting that the home is not the only primary source and cause. For her, we have to look beyond the role of the home. Family ideology itself is a result of social construction.

Food is recognised as women's business. MacSween surfaces the role of women in patriarchal bourgeois culture - as service providers to men and children. She talks about the placement of women in both private and public life. Regarding the public sphere, she perhaps limited herself by making reference only to single and career minded women. She fails to address other types i.e. mature aged women who have of late entered the public sector or young one-parent mothers, who return to the private sector after 5 pm to feed families. The latter would implicate her view of public sector women, who do not cook as it contradicts the self-identified role whereby food is polluting to success. I would agree with MacSween when she says that there is a link between anorexia and the desires of the single career-minded woman. The anorexic absorbs the diet and nutritional discourses, albeit more steadfastly as the process continues.

The understanding of ritual is fruitfully used in MacSween's analysis. Each action is significant. Ritualised eating is social both in meaning and in practice. MacSween identifies a distinction here in that meaning is more social and in practice is more individualised. Food like desire is controlled. She explains the minimalist attitude to cooking and preparing food as symbolic. Raw food is symbolic of pre-social conditioning. Food that requires no cooking or preparation represents the elimination of the socially constructed female role. In this sense, food that gives pleasure presents danger as it reinforces the social positioning of women i.e. to serve and please. MacSween articulates food consumption. It represents male invasion.

Danger and chaos are concepts that are significant in anorexia. I would agree with MacSween in her view that denial is not pleasurable, but rather reinforces chaos and compulsion. Her approach towards the similarities between anorexia and bulimia is good. Whereas psychiatric opinion considers these eating disorders as different, I would agree with MacSween's view to bulimia and anorexia, that they are symptoms to the same causes. However whereas MacSween assumes that ; 'bingeing' in bulimia is symbolic of failure and defeat, I disagree. I believe bingeing to be a test of control. One is able to consume large amounts then instantly reject.

I would agree with MacSween's contention that anorexia not only intensifies but transforms the conflicts between desire and control, dependence and

autonomy. These characterise women's experience with both their bodies and their relationship with food. Anorexia aims to place the body as the property of the self, not of culture.

To summarise this book, MacSween sees anorexia as a response to dualistic social constructions. Two contradicting body concepts are internalised: the 'individual' which is masculine subject and, the 'feminine' body which is the alienated passive/receptive object. The anorexic body is self defined as the active subject. Anorexia aims to end the dualism of the subject and object. It is a strategy of resistance, that sooner or later becomes its own oppressor. From the skeleton, the self emerges and is an individual response and transformation of social meaning. Flesh as desire is reduced. Yet denial being viewed as individual control is also social control. In the light of MacSween's approach, just as the subject is passive to the object, the subject is passive to bourgeois culture. Both are consuming entities.

To have any comprehension of the anorexic symptom, I would agree with MacSween that it is imperative that the analysis of social structures requires a thorough analysis. This requires embarking on meaning as well as practice. She suggests that a collective feminist engagement in exploring meaning and practice as 'social' may assist in changing the subjection of women. This is more of a preventative rather than a cure.

To conclude, in an accessible way this book details the inner experience of persons with anorexia. MacSween is to be congratulated for her nuanced appreciation of the self-alienation that is common to women with eating disorders. Her book is a valuable addition to the evolving literature and is one that deserves recognition.

Siobhan Walsh *is a MSc student of Social Research. Northumberland University (Newcastle).*

Clive R. Hollin, Kevin J. Epps and David J. Kendrick
Managing Behavioural Treatment:
Policy and Practice with Delinquent Adolescents
Routledge 1995
ISBN 0-415-05005-7 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-05006-5 (pbk)
pp xi + 205

SANDY HOBBS

In their preface, the authors explain that a more appropriate title for their book would have been 'Managing and/or Supervising Applied Behaviour Analysis Programmes for Behavioural Change (with Some Theory but with-

out Claiming Theoretical Dominance and Not Colluding with the System'. The key phrase here is 'applied behaviour analysis', a term which is used to refer to the applied wing of the radical behaviourist movement in psychology. Behaviourism is one of three major competing paradigms in contemporary psychology, the other two being the cognitive and the psychodynamic. Protagonists of these paradigms tend to either ignore the others or assume that they have lost their significance. Cognitive psychologists, for example, sometimes assume that behaviourism was a school of thought whose time has passed. However, a recent study of major psychology journals shows behaviourism thriving alongside its rivals (Friman, Allen, Kerwin & Larzelere, 1993). Reference to the current state of psychology seems a necessary preamble to commenting on this book, since the success or failure of the book will depend not simply on its inherent characteristics but on the preconceptions of potential readers.

Radical behaviourism made its first impact in psychology with laboratory research, predominantly with animal subjects, involving distinctive techniques which practitioners call the 'experimental analysis of behaviour'. Leading exponents of the approach, such as B.F.Skinner, had from the beginning envisaged applying the principles to human beings in natural settings. Three non-experimental works by Skinner, the novel *Walden Two* (1948) *Science and Human Behavior* (1953) and *Verbal Behavior* (1957) were in effect manifestos for such a view. Empirical work applying radical behaviourist ideas to real human problems soon followed, and there developed the approach 'applied behaviour analysis' which the present authors employ to describe their own work.

Radical behaviourism stresses the advantages of analyzing human beings in terms of observable behaviour and environmental events, rather than in terms of inferred mental processes or states. Presented with a problem of human conduct, the behaviourist will seek to restate it in terms of behaviour, its antecedents and its consequences. This A:B:C approach is applicable both to attempts to understand problems and to attempts to solve them.

Applied behaviour analysis has an important role in determining the ultimate success or failure of radical behaviourism. Since many people find behaviourist terminology strange or even frightening, it is likely to become widely acceptable only if it can be shown to be productive. In the laboratory, radical behaviourists are demonstrably successful at predicting and influencing animal behaviour. Similar levels of success with human beings in their natural settings are harder to pull off. This does not mean that behaviourist principles are inappropriate. The attempts by the behaviourist to modify human behaviour take place within a complex field of other influences.

It is with the tricky business of successfully adapting laboratory-derived principles to the 'real world' that this book concerns itself. A brief 24-page chapter outlines the principles of behaviour analysis and a behavioral approach to delinquency. The bulk of the book is concerned with a fast array of practical problems, such as treatment design, behavioural assess-

ment, staff training, financial constraints, responding to emergencies, legal framework, and threats to programme integrity. Much of what is said strikes this reviewer as sound, though it is not always clear what is distinctively behaviourist in the suggestions being made.

Behaviour analysis can in principle be applied to any area of human conduct. Did the present authors consider applying it to the business of writing a book? Presumably a behaviourist approach to authorship would involve decisions being made about which persuasive techniques are likely to shape the behaviour of the target audience. In their preface, the authors do mention a technical problem they faced. They had to assume a certain amount of background knowledge in the reader but were aware that readers would vary in the extent of that knowledge. However, they have not stated this problem in a behavioural way, which suggests that they did not analyze their problem in line with the principles on which the book is meant to be based.

The reviewer is forced to fall back on impressionistic judgements as to the likely success of the book. It seems unlikely that the book would persuade the newcomer to the behaviourist approach but, since some prior knowledge is assumed, that is presumably not its aim. However, who are the 'knowledgeable' readers to whom it is addressed? Enthusiastic newcomers converted by Skinner? Practitioners in danger of backsliding? Such readers may find helpful nuggets of guidance here. However, the book as a whole is written in flat, uninspiring style which is by no means a necessary concomitant of the behaviourist philosophy. It is not clear in which circumstances the authors consider it necessary to use precise behaviourist phraseology and in which vaguer non-technical language is sufficient. There is a regrettable tendency to illustrate with hypothetical examples rather than real ones.

If you are already committed to behavioural treatment methods but have practical problems implementing them, this book may well have some parts which are helpful to you. If you want to find out about behaviourism as an approach to human problems, look elsewhere.

Reference
Friman, P.C. Allen, K.D., Kerwin, M.L.E. & Larzelere, R. (1993) 'Changes in modern psychology: a citation analysis of the Kuhnian displacement thesis'. *American Psychologist*, 48, 658-664.

Sandy Hobbs *teaches psychology in the Department of Applied Social Studies, University of Paisley.*

Kate Hill
The Long Sleep : Young People And Suicide.
Virago 1995
ISBN 1-85381-589-6
£9.99 (pbk)
pp 268

Colin Pritchard
Suicide - The Ultimate Rejection? A psycho-social study.
Open University Press 1995
ISBN 0-335-19032-4
pp 209

SUE MORGAN

Two excellent books both hugely informative with practical advice on how suicide may be prevented. Hill leans heavily on the experience of those young people who have attempted suicide, and the families and friends of those who have actually died by suicide. Pritchard's perspective is more medical, sociological and academic. Some of their work overlaps, occasionally their findings differ, but one book compliments the other. Hill's book is easy to read, and Pritchard's worth the struggle.

Suicide currently kills about 70 young people aged between 15-24 every month in the U.K. At least 55 of these are young men. Both books consider suicide, why it happens and what can be done to avoid it: Hill writes with specific reference to young people. Motivated by the need to understand her own brother's suicide and a determination to develop an awareness of preventative measures, her book uses personal anecdotes. This works well. It lends poignancy and grounds the issue firmly in the reality and experiences of those affected by this deeply distressing phenomena. From these people come valuable insights. This information is backed up by extensive knowledge of research literature which considers social, economic and other environmental factors. 'The Long Sleep' has very clear recommendations for those in contact with young people who may be considering committing suicide.

Colin Pritchard writes from the perspective of both social researcher and psychiatric social worker.The theme of rejection runs throughout his book.The person who commits suicide rejects the world which has rejected him. Pritchard examines the context in which this rejection occurs and develops an integrated needs led intervention and treatment model which can save lives. This book is aimed at those working in the professions of social work, health and medicine, counselling and psychiatric nursing. It contains in depth analysis of past and current research and writing on suicide, looks at the history and development of treatments and attitudes, cultural and ethnic differentials, international perspectives and comparisons. His work includes consideration of the development of attitudes towards suicide in history and literature, the effects of suicide on the family, and he broadens the debate to include euthanasia. Both writers agree that suicide can be predicted and prevented.

Hill has statistics as her starting point, explaining how difficult it is to determine these accurately. All deaths from unnatural causes must be legally investigated. Procedures differ in Scotland to the rest of the U.K. Suicide has never been a crime in Scotland and so its investigation is free from criminal associations.

In the other parts of the U.K. a verdict of suicide requires evidence of intention to die which is beyond doubt.This is very difficult to prove in many cases, and the chosen method of suicide has an influence on the likelihood of the verdict, for example hanging is perceived as less ambiguous than an overdose. Courts are also eager to spare the feelings of families and so sometimes prefer to record an uncertainty rather than a suicide. So the official statistics underestimate the actual numbers, verdicts of accidental death and undetermined death mask many more suicides.

Hill points out that suicide is the second biggest killer of 15-34 year olds, more young people die this way than in road traffic accidents. Young women attempt suicide more often than young men, but young men use more deadly means, so more of them actually die. In Britain, in the last ten years, the suicide rate of 16-24 year old women of Asian origin is three times higher than that of young white women.A study in Edinburgh showed that youth suicides of unemployed outnumbered those of the employed by ten to one. Many young people who attempt suicide tell no one and so accurate records are not possible.

Pritchard writes that between 10 and 20% of those who unsuccessfully attempt suicide will die at their own hand within the next three years. So it is unwise to consider this as 'just a cry for help'. He further stresses that often those who do actually commit suicide have not been adequately supported by their doctors. His statistics show that one third of suicides had seen their G.P. within the three weeks prior to their death. Pritchard compares statistics from around the world and looks at cultural factors that are influential.

One important area which Hill covers, is the issue of suicide as it relates to young lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Research in the U.S.A. establishes suicide as the leading cause of death amongst this group of youth, 20-35% have attempted it. Young gay men are six times more likely and young lesbians twice as likely than heterosexual young people to try to kill themselves. Most of these suicide attempts took place under the age of 21, a third under 17.

Due to the way records are kept and decisions made in defining suicide in the U.K. it is not known what proportion were lesbian and gay. Evidence of the victims sexuality may not be available if the young person has not come out to anyone. Coroners, even when aware that sexuality is an issue, may choose to ignore the fact in order to spare families embarrassment and suffering. It is the initial period of coming out which Hill identifies as the time of highest risk.

For young lesbian and gay people the risk of rejection by family, friends and peer group runs high. U.S. research with one group of young people

reported negative reactions by 43% of parents and 41% of friends. 55% of the group had been verbally abused, 30% physically assaulted. Many young gays and lesbians are forced to leave home because of their parents views of their sexuality. Their self confidence and self esteem is highly vulnerable from negative cultural influences and homophobic attitudes. Isolation, lack of knowledge about homosexuality and anticipation of rejection combine to place this group of young people in a high-risk category.

In a chapter which considers the sociology of mental health and suicide Pritchard welcomes the government targets to reduce suicide by a third and predicts that this will not be achieved. He shows why he thinks that the blame for this failure will be directed towards front line health workers. He first examines Durkheim's 'Le Suicide' written in 1888. Durkheim argued that the suicide rate is very stable and any big changes to that rate indicate environmental rather than pathological factors. Durkheim's greatest understanding was his concept of an anomic suicide in which individuals, in the face of the experience of a rejecting, excluding society, were in their desperation more likely to die. He crucially demonstrated the link between increased suicide and economic recession.

Pritchard examines the work of sociologists and psychologists writing since then, and finds Durkheim's premise still valid today. He argues that the suicide rate cannot be drastically reduced while unemployment remains so high. Acknowledging that most unemployed people do not come into contact with mental health or social services he looks at the complex range of psycho-social problems associated with unemployment, and the defensive responses which can lessen its demoralising effect. Whilst the rise in crime, child abuse, neglect, divorce, mental illness and suicide rates can be seen to co-exist with the rise in unemployment at different times in different countries, these are at their worst when they occur alongside the greatest reduction in welfare supports.

The notion of the inadequate parent is one of the lynch-pins of underclass theory and Pritchard shows how RD Laing's work has been used to shift the blame for mental illness from the sufferer to the sufferer's family. Yet the family remains the single most important source of support for the vast majority of people with mental illness.

Other important writing of the 60s and 70s developed awareness of how medicine defined behaviour, how stigma spoiled identities, and how mental institutions restricted behaviour and recovery. These ideas were widely accepted and influential- remember Nurse Ratchett from 'One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest'? The idea that patients need to be protected from institutions and wicked professionals has been used to justify the closure of hospitals and the 'Care in the Community' policies use empty rhetoric to disguise massive resource reductions. The debate which has placed emphasis on patients rights and choices is meaningless without a value base which holds social justice responsibilities to less advantaged people as central. Patients have great rights to services which don't exist.

Pritchard describes how front line staff (the next least powerful people after the clients) are blamed for the inadequacies of the services rather than

those who are responsible for policy. He writes that there has been organisational, political and public neglect of the workers who are under-resourced and undervalued. He states that most workers are diligent in the performance of their duties, give more than they are paid for, actually like their clients, and that not enough attention is given to this. Bad practice is not the norm. He is mindful of the ways in which professionals make mistakes, the obligations they feel to present certainties from noncertainties, and to 'do something' when they don't really know what to do. He argues that professionals need a sociological perspective in order to understand the wider influences at play in their decision making, they must keep central to their work the question of 'who is the primary beneficiary'. Because each individual question of potential suicide is different, it is dangerous for professionals to assume knowledge in a predetermined way. Our response to each situation should be fresh if we are to reduce the suicide rate.

In the chapter 'Perceptions of the Suicidal: Unthinkable Fears,Comforting Myths' Hill notes the powerful aversion of adults towards recognising young people's intention to commit suicide. Myths and misconceptions based on fear, denial and taboo have been created. Hill argues that if these prevail, we make it impossible for young people to communicate their self destructive feelings. Hill describes the strong taboo surrounding the topic of youth suicide and self destruction. People in her study testify that nobody wants to talk about it even though they know you've lost someone close, or have attempted suicide.The feelings of the suicidal young can 'arouse acute anxiety in others that potential sources of help are immobilised.'

Hill continues this chapter by examining six popular myths which encourage bad responses and cut young people off from possible help. Myth number one is that children don't think about suicide. The Samaritans and Childline receive thousands of calls from children considering suicide, children as young as three years old are recognised as suffering from depression. Factors influencing such misery in children's lives are parental death or abandonment, sexual and physical abuse and mental illness in family members. Myth two is that young people who threaten suicide don't kill themselves. 75% of young people who deliberately kill themselves give clear warnings of their intention before hand.

Myth number three is the assertion that if someone wants to kill themselves then there's nothing you can do about it. This may be a good excuse not to try, but is false. Hill describes the co - existence of the 'I want to be dead' with the 'help me I want to live'. Much can be done and Hill later in the book lists organisations that can give immediate and long term help and gives guidelines for anyone encountering suicidal talk or behaviour in the young. The fourth myth is that talking about suicide encourages it but Hill argues that allowing a young person to talk about his or her worst fears and feelings actually provides a lifeline. Although there is evidence of imitative suicidal behaviour, to fail to respond to a cry for help leaves a young person more isolated and at risk.The key word here is sensitivity.

Myth number five is that youth suicide cannot be prevented, because its too impulsive. More likely to be true is that clues haven't been perceived,

causes are unrecognised and young peoples feelings are trivialised by adults. Although crises can escalate quickly it's often the last straw in a process which has taken place over some time. Myth number six states that suicide prevention should be left to the professionals. No - because many young people contemplating suicide have no contact with the professionals. Young people are more likely to confide in family, friends, teachers, or workmates and these, Hill argues, are the crucial opportunities for intervention. Throughout the rest of the book Hill gives some very sound guidance and practical information about how to interrupt the suicidal process, give support and get help for young people in crisis. The voluntary organisations which have been working with the issue for many years have built up useful resources. The Samaritans will always answer the phone and some of the young people in Hill's study testify to their worth.

Hill's book gave me the confidence and ability to tackle the subject with young people. Pritchards book informed me of what appropriate professional health and social services would look like and so helped me to help young people know what to ask for. Both books are extremely useful. When read together they provide an important resource and invaluable insight into the disturbing subject of suicide. They left me more informed as to how to read the signs and better prepared to make effective interventions.

Sue Morgan *is a school-based youth worker in North Yorkshire.*

Helen Cowie and Sonia Sharp
Peer Counselling in Schools: A Time to Listen
David Fulton Publishers 1996
ISBN 1-85346-367-1
£13.99 (pbk)
pp 144

RUTH GILCHRIST

This is a useful book, to dip into rather than use as a model to work to. It would be good to read it alongside Keith Topping's *The Peer Tutoring Handbook* which includes the history and research findings of the Bell-Lancaster model on which peer education is based. Peer Counselling In Schools: A Time To Listen, raises and discusses many of the questions around the setting up of a peer project and uses illustrations of projects to show how these have been resolved in schools.

I found it refreshing to pick up a book about young people that starts by proclaiming their abilities and potential, instead of just seeing them as problems. A book which looks towards their involvement in helping each other and the role that adults can play in aiding and supporting them to do

this. There has been an increased interest in peer education programmes over the last few years and many of these are more concerned with behaviour modification than education. Peer Counselling is a useful book for those thinking about establishing a peer project in a school and also for those interested in the questions raised by working with peer education in the area of social responsibility.

The book is divided into three parts. Part one gives an overview arguing that 'peer support' should be taken more seriously and gives guidelines on how to support young people in peer counselling. It also points out that the idea of 'empowering young people to offer support to peers in distress' is a threat to some professionals in the field who doubt students' capability and so miss their potential. It defines peer counselling as 'an extension of the very natural willingness, evident in most social groups to offer help, support and a listening ear.' but does acknowledge the problems that can occur when it is abused. Biological, psychological, social and cultural reasons are explored in an attempt to explain peer support systems. The moral dimension is added under the sub heading 'Learning about social responsibility'.

Within this first section, the subject is put into the context of where and how an effective service is likely to thrive. The reader is taken through various research studies and approaches to befriending, counselling and conflict resolution and the contexts in which peer counselling programmes are likely to work. Examples of training sessions on active listening skills and mediation are given. And dangers are pointed out of running peer counselling programmes without enough thought given to the ethical and moral issues and when they are unconnected with the workings of the school as a whole.

It is here that ethics and boundaries are discussed and also the importance of support and supervision. In my opinion this is the real strength of the book. Here there is no simple solution given, just questions explored and the reality faced that ethical issues will continually be raised in peer counselling relationships which must be addressed through ongoing training and supervision. Problems are raised and examined, for example confidentiality and the legal obligation schools have to report the disclosure of abuse to the appropriate social service department. This means that in schools total confidentiality can not be promised. In some instances this will surely act to silence individuals.

The main criticism I have with the book is with the practical examples given in Part II. Too many are projects around the latest 'problem' of bullying while the real potential of informal education is hidden. Young people should be able to raise and deal with their own concerns and learn from them within the structure of peer counselling. However it is good to be able to read about practitioners' experience and the ways in which peer education has been adapted to different circumstances. I was particularly interested in the idea of 'a circle of friends', where a whole class learnt to listen and support a very difficult and unhappy class mate and how that individual responded to the approach taken.

Part III is about evaluation and the concern a 'number of researchers, notably de Rosenroll (1989), [have] about concluding that peer help pro-

grammes are being properly used and that they are being systematically evaluated'. It is important that evaluation is built into projects but I fail to agree with the authors concern about evaluating the 'outcomes' of this type of project as I cannot see how it could be done. By ensuring the quality of the project and training and continually monitoring how well those involved understand the importance of their contribution, we can learn about the value peer counsellors give to the project. We cannot monitor the learning of those people who have used it as clients as the full long-term effects will not be known by themselves or their peer helpers. However there is plenty of research which shows how peer tutors confidence and feeling of self worth improves through being involved in a 'helping' role(see Topping 1988) and lessons can be learnt from this.

I heartily recommend anyone considering setting up a peer education project of any kind to read and take note of the areas raised in this book and anyone writing about young people to note their potential as educators raised in the opening few pages. I really liked the book and although there were things I disagreed with and would have done differently in my practice I learnt a lot and was able to clarify some of my concerns around the difficulties in developing a peer counselling programme. It is a book to dip into for anyone interested in the potential of peer education, to take ideas from and also to consider the implications of such projects. Peer counselling and indeed peer education as a whole is not a cost cutting exercise, using young people's 'natural skills to talk to their peers', but an area of work which needs careful thought and resources in order that the potential of young people is encouraged and built on within a structured framework.

Reference

Topping K, (1988) *The Peer Tutoring Handbook: promoting co-operative learning* London; Croom Helm.

Ruth Gilchrist *works for YMCA Newcastle.*

Terry Irving, David Maunders, Geoff Sherington
Youth in Australia : Policy Administration and Politics
MacMillan 1995
ISBN 0 7329 1920 7
A$74.95 (hbk)
A$36.95 (pbk)
pp 398

MIKE PRESDEE

Right at the beginning this lengthy book sows the seeds of its own confusion when it declares, 'This is a book about youth policy, not about youth in general. It therefore focuses on the relationship between the state and young

people.' (pxiii) In reality it overwhelmingly concentrates on the state's response to young people whilst young peoples' responses to these policies are rarely commented on, resulting in a one-sided feel to the whole text. There is also little discussion as to whether youth policies are in the end to do with young people at all, rather being more connected with matters concerning political and bureaucratic dynamics than young people themselves.

However as a resource book for those interested in Australian youth policies or policy development more generally, this is a useful text with the historical data being extensive and included in appendices in a useful form. But the historical 'story' is confused. At times it's more a story of past adult bureaucratic games where Public Servants, under the guise of management, manage nothing but their own careers. This later section is none the less fascinating for its description of the decline of the Australian Public Service as bureaucratic battles are waged and take on a life of their own outside of any of the social realities of youth. This organisational history of both State and Federal policy struggles tells us more about how organisations work than the relationship between state and youth. There is a problem here of what actually constitutes the history of social policy and what constitutes young peoples' responses to it. For example are young people who are school non-attenders responding to educational policies or have those educational policies been developed as a response to school non-attendance? Do criminal justice policies respond to the activities of young people which are in themselves a response to existing economic and welfare policies previously created by the state? Is it possible for the state to first criminalise the culture of young people and then introduce a policy to combat youth crime for other political purposes?

To some extent the authors are aware of the problems they face when they say, 'we have been consciously aware of the social realities which cannot be found in policy documents alone.' (p. xv) Interwoven with these social realities are the political realities which often lie behind the development and introduction of specific policies. These dynamics are not necessarily to do with adult domination over young people, as the authors claim, but more to do with the gaining or maintaining of political dominance. Indeed once power has been achieved policies often lapse, or are pushed aside or left to languish unsupported and under funded or simply not funded at all. This is especially so in the area of youth which in part explains the plethora of policy which appears to have short shelf life as organisational structures rapidly come and go. This makes it especially difficult for the authors to identify the policies that matter. There has been plenty of academic evidence that young people themselves either totally ignore or despise or are untouched by the rhetoric of both policy makers and policy practitioners.

At best this is an intriguing story of adults 'behaving badly', using the social reality of young people as a battle ground for their own political and bureaucratic discourses irrespective of the overall effects on the lives of young people. Although the organisation of the book darts backwards and forwards through time in a confusion of trees and woods there are at times important insights to the direction that modern organisations are taking

showing clearly the excesses of managerialist practice as it works on the youth policy that is the manifestation of the conscience of the caring classes. The overall story is depressing and full of warnings to all of us involved in some way in the lives of young people. If as this book suggests the modern discourse 'denies the need for some overall youth policy' and if as it further suggests 'community is still the focus of activity, but the emphasis has shifted to managing it, not developing it' then we are beginning a period where youth workers' prime role will be to disempower young people on behalf of the state. For this analysis alone this book needs to be struggled with and widely read.

***Mike Presdee** is a Reader in Criminology, University of Sunderland*

Ben Whitney
The Truth about Truancy
Kogan Page 1994
ISBN 0-7494-1416-2
£14.95
pp 130

Edith Le Riche
Combating Truancy in Schools; Listening to the voice of the Pupil
David Fulton in association with The Roehampton Institute 1995
ISBN 1-85346-337-X
£11.99
pp 101

B. Gardiner and B. Thompson (eds)
A.W.O.L. Factors Affecting School Attendance
City of Sunderland Education Dept. and Save the Children 1995
ISBN 1-870322-79-7
£9.75
pp 70

MERLE DAVIES

These three publications all focus on truancy and why young people do not attend school. Some of the reasons given are well known ie. subjects are boring, peer pressure to 'bunk off' for an afternoon whilst others are less well documented and provide food for thought. It is recognised that the impact of the James Bulger tragedy should be included but it is more an acknowledgemet of the fact that the media highlighted an age old problem and Whitney concedes 'that truancy is more of an irritant than a major social problem'.

Both the Whitney and the Le Riche books cover much the same ground but of the two I certainly found the former the more readable. It may also be the fact that Whitney's ethos is steeped in the ideology of the Youth Service which gives it appeal. Whitney knows his subject and considers steps which could be taken by schools to tackle the problem of poor attendance. It is a practical book which considers common sense measures which treat young people as young adults who are beginning to take control of their own lives. He considers the fact that young people have very few rights in the education system and demonstrates this fact with the example that young people are given no opportunity to be heard during their own exclusion procedure. He highlights the fact that many pupils, certainly in the years most affected by non-attendance ie the final two years of compulsory education, are leading adult lives out of school hours but are treated as children during school time. He makes a plea to schools to make their establishments places where young people want to be and young people feel like valued members of society. Punitive measures he explains are not the way ahead and he offers several suggestions, two of which are that there may be mileage in considering different kinds of schools to suit different pupils and a more flexible system which will develop the child in various ways not only academically.

Le Riche has undertaken some of her own research on the subject. Like Whitney she considers the effect League tables have had on schools with poor attenders and how this can propel the authorities with the worst attendances to find ways of turning the tables. She highlights the fact that what may be viewed as non-attendance by one school may not be counted by another and that the publication of league tables has now made schools more market conscious which has encouraged headteachers to reduce the rates of absenteeism. This, she suggests, has had a positive effect as schools have had to make themselves more attractive to pupils. Le Riche's book is factual and informative but she does not provide us with any solutions to the problem. Her interviews with young people give some good but somewhat predictable quotes. Their answers to her questionnaires on what could be done to encourage young people to attend school all point to lessons being more enjoyable and staff more accessible. Chapter 2 looks at the causes of truancy and interestingly mentioned research in the British Medical Journal which provided a link between smoking and truancy. Other aspects covered were factors involving society and environment, home, personal, school and resource, educational welfare and the judicial service.

One interesting aspect when reading both books was the differing outcomes from various research. Whitney does not believe that bullying plays a large part in whether or not young people attend school. Whilst Le Riche saw bullying as a fairly strong reason for young people to truant, she quotes a T.E.S. report of 1994 which reported that, 'One in five 13 to 16 year olds are said to play truant to avoid being bullied'. This latter point is one which is given even more weight in the third publication, A.W.O.L.

This report comes from a conference on non-school attendance held in Sunderland in 1994. Section 1 looks at the reports from the conference

workshops and gives the reader a taste of what was discussed and the ideas which were considered around topics such as, exclusion, improving standards, creative techniques for dealing with disaffection, does the system meet the needs of young people and interestingly an alternative to school project - The Edenhill experience. The latter involved two young people and a parent in co-facilitating discussion with conference delegates on why young people do not attend school. The reasons offered in this workshop mirrored much of what was presented in the two publications discussed earlier.

Section 2 contains the selected papers from the speakers in attendance and provide good reading from some well known educationalists. Tony Jeffs' paper, 'Rights and Wrongs of Truancy', picks up Whitney's theme of allowing young people the right to have some say in their education and to ensure that schools are places they choose to be not somewhere they are compelled to attend. The Home Office Policy Research Unit paper, 'Safer Schools : An Anti-Bullying Initiative' gives some good ideas on tackling bullying and a programme of intervention with measures which can be used at school, unit and individual level. Other papers in this section consider the needs of young carers, an often forgotten section when considering young people who are non-attenders, and the educational implications of 'caring'; state responses to school non-attendance and Truancy-exercising a choice. The different backgrounds of the speakers gives one an excellent overall perspective on the 'problem'. All three publications are about an age old topic which Jeffs states at the end of the report 'we need to learn to live with truancy, to avoid overreacting to what is not a particularly serious problem'.

__Merle Davies__ works at Gloucestershire Youth and Community Service as a Team Leader for the Cotswolds.

Mark Griffiths
Adolescent Gambling
Routledge 1995
ISBN 0-415-05834-1
£14.99 (pbk)
pp 304

FRED CARTMEL

I was very enthusiastic when receiving this book and intrigued about adolescent gambling, having been a gambler from an early age. The book addresses an interesting area of research which has been neglected by youth researchers who have investigated risk behaviour among young people in Britain, from both a sociological and psychological perspective. The author investigates adolescent fruit machine playing behaviour in amusement arcades, predominantly from a psychological perspective.

The book is divided into ten chapters which have all been previously published elsewhere in different forms. The first two chapters give an overview of the psychology of gambling and discuss previous research into adolescent gambling. I felt that the literature on gambling was not that relevant to British research as the majority of the investigations were conducted in America and Canada, where there are stricter laws on gambling than in Britain. Young people's access to fruit machines in America cannot be compared with that in Britain as the majority of states prohibit gambling and fruit machines are only accessible in licensed casinos. In Britain, young people have access to gambling machines from an early age as they are located in everyday settings, ranging from motorway service stations to fish and chip shops.

Chapter three details two studies the author undertook with young people who frequent amusement arcades in two different locations. The analysis provides an insight into why young people play machines, who they first played machines with and how much degree of skill is involved in playing the machines. I was disappointed that there was no background data on the cohort, family background, social class etc. which would have given the reader a better picture of the young people who play machines. Chapter four provides details of observational analysis of fruit machine gambling. The details provided are very informative, although at times become rather descriptive. The author makes several presumptions which from a reformed gambler's perspective could be disputed. The author states that 'players continued to carry on playing the same machines even during a bad losing run - until they had won something. This was presumably to let the bystander know that they can win on the machines' (p. 106). There could be other explanations for the gambler remaining on the machine which the author has not investigated. Gamblers could be waiting for their luck to change or frightened to leave the machine because they fear another gambler taking over and winning from the machine. The author could have asked the gamblers during interviews why they remained at the machines when on a losing streak and would not have had to rely on his own presumptions.

For me chapter seven is the most interesting and provides rich qualitative case study accounts of young addictive gamblers' motivations and reasons for gambling. I think that the qualitative details are the main strengths of the book. This chapter provides rich accounts of the misery pathological gambling causes to individuals and families. There are narratives about young people who have committed crime and played truant from school to play fruit machines.

Chapter eight looks at the structural characteristics of fruit machine gambling and provides a concise historical account of the changing character and the marketing of fruit machines. This is where I feel Griffiths and others researching the structural effects on adolescent gambling have a major problem, as the machines are rapidly changing. This chapter is already starting to date, as the majority of new machines now being produced are based on themes. There are machines based on television programmes and

films (East Enders, Coronation Street, Indiana Jones etc.) or board games (Monopoly, Cluedo). The structural characteristics discussed were all very interesting but I felt that there was one major omission and that was any discussion about the significance of the social space of the arcade.

Chapter nine provides extensive details of the treatments available for addictive gamblers which I will return to later. Chapter ten gives an overview which I felt raised more questions than are answered. My hackles were raised at some of the policy recommendations for controlling young people's gambling. Adolescents are involved in many 'risk' behaviours in the transition from childhood to adulthood and for young people the teenage years are a time of experimentation and risk taking. Young people are more involved in crime, experimenting with drugs, drinking alcohol etc. in their teens than older generations and this is part of the youth transition. The author discusses treatments for young gamblers; one includes pharmacological intervention which would provide 'highs' for the young people. These include 'beta blockers to slow down heart rates, anti depressants and anxiolytics to relieve depression and anxiety' (p249). Is the medical model not powerful enough in Britain and would a recommendation like this not provide more power to their elbow?

Overall, after reading the book, I was more informed about the subject of adolescent gambling and especially the problem of pathological gamblers. On the negative side the author wants the reader to accept that gambling can be an 'addiction' if certain antecedent conditions exist. This I find problematic. With many other risk behaviours, adolescents grow out of them. The peak age for young people's involvement in crime is 18 for males and 15 for females. One question that needs to be answered is do young people grow out of fruit machine addiction? I was left wondering how big a phenomenon adolescent gambling is among young people in Britain, as there is no empirical evidence on the number of young people who play fruit machines regularly. There could be an opportunity for researchers investigating young people's lifestyles to consider including questions regarding gambling among 'risk' behaviours when interviewing adolescents. Griffiths' research was mainly conducted in seaside resorts, where young people have the opportunity to play in amusement arcades. This might not be representative of all areas.

I thought the policy recommendations made by the author would mean a reduction in the limited freedom young people have at present and I feel that social scientists should not be recommending more control over young people, but should be encouraging the empowerment of adolescents.

Fred Cartmel *works as a researcher in the Youth, Education and Employment Research Unit at Glasgow University.*

Alf Ronnby
Mobilizing Local Communities
Avebury
ISBN 1-85972-189-3
£49.50 (hbk)
pp 375

HUGH BUTCHER

This lengthy book is at once stimulating and frustrating. In it, Ronnby seeks to provide a perspective on the development and current status of locally based community work and community mobilisation in Sweden. It is an ambitious undertaking in which the author discusses issues of ethics and value; analyses the political and social contexts that have informed the evolving shape of community work in Sweden over recent decades; paints a picture of contemporary practice in both the southern cities and the village communities of the far north; offers guidelines for facilitating effective mobilisation; and draws on a range of authorities to develop his own community work theory - 'praxiology'.

The text includes plenty of case material of local action initiatives, providing useful insights into the Swedish scene. Less helpful are the hundred or so 'snapshot' type photographs which break up the text; while providing a corrective to the glossy art-work of the Swedish tourist offices they added little to my understanding of the textual points being made on the adjacent pages!

In Chapter 1 the author offers a perspective on the value of locally based action for change. He neatly captures the triple dynamic of community work as informal education, political enfranchisement, and collective action to promote change in participants' material and social conditions. Decades of bureaucratic welfare-statism have left people atomised and dependent; creeping privatisation merely substitutes political alienation for economic alienation. Community work can contribute to a 'third way' - between state and market - to help people mobilise at grass roots level to develop local institutions, which are democratically controlled and are responsive to local aspirations. Social, economic, and political development in the village of Byssbon is used to illustrate this model. Through co-operatives, clubs, and other local organisations (and with some support from the County Administration and the Farms Association) the village school has been renovated and rendered locally accountable, premises for weaving and baking established, four new homes built, and businesses set up to run activity holidays, repair machines and manufacture health remedies. A new self confidence, enhanced skills, new jobs, and greater social solidarity have resulted - alongside the material gains - from such community mobilisation.

In Chapter 2 Ronnby draws upon standard UK and North American community work literature to develop his own theoretical model, 'praxiology'. This is a new name for what amounts to the humanistic model of viewing and working with people as conscious, acting subjects who are purposefully trying

to create and understand their world better. The practice implications of working from such a perspective are elaborated.

Chapter 3 traces the development of community work as an occupation in Sweden. Now accepted as the 'third arm' of social work, its evolution is shown to owe much to the work of earlier Christian, workers' and students' movements, strengthened of late by the attempts of newer movements (Womens' Green etc) to seek allies in their search for alternatives to technocratic welfare statism. The reader is presented with a picture of revitalised community work in the Sweden of the 1990s contributing to broad based social action to regenerate the associations, community networks and co-operative processes of a weakened civil society.

Chapter 4 is about 'doing' community work and practice guidelines are offered on how to get started, mobilising for action, networking, planning tactics and so forth. There is nothing particularly new here, but it constitutes one of the most clearly written 'nuts and bolts' guides to practice that I have read. It is helpfully illustrated by case study material throughout.

The final chapter is, to me, the most interesting. It describes the current state of rural community development in the remote Lapland region in the north of the country. There, a 'new' co-operative movement has become a vital force for cultural, economic and social development. Local communities, with some support from public bodies, are creating a wide range of producer (agriculture) co-ops, user co-ops (social care, leisure centres) and village co-ops (to build and run housing for elderly people, children's centres, the school and the jetty, etc.) Ronnby provides detailed information about how the co-operatives are constituted and organised, as well as offering a picture of an associational model of community government which seems both workable and attractive.

This is a 'mixed-bag' of a book. It is long and sometimes repetitive; rigorous editing would also have helped to pull the themes from the rather discrete chapters together in a more coherent and satisfying way. On the other hand it is always useful to have access to up-to-date comparative material, and this will be the book's great merit as far as readers of *Youth and Policy* are concerned. It will also be particularly useful to those interested in rural work, as well as to those thinking through ways of giving practical expression to the renewed interest in forms of associational democracy.

Hugh Butcher *tutors in community work at Bradford and Ilkley Community College, West Yorkshire.*

Sarah Irwin
Rights of Passage, Social Change and the Transition from Youth to Adulthood
UCL Press
ISBN 1-85728-429-1 (hbk)
ISBN 1-85728-430-5 (pbk)
£35.00 (hbk)
£12.95 (pbk)

PATRICK AINLEY

'Transition' has a comforting ring because, if it is only a stage young people are going through, they will soon grow out of it. Yet our society lacks shared communal rituals to confirm adult status, like the secular ceremonies of the USA school-leaving 'prom'. Moreover, with most 16 year-olds remaining in education, the key transition has been lost which associated leaving school with becoming adult for most young people in the past.

The new situation is reflected in concerns about the 'immaturity' of young people, countered by the equally evergreen idea that they are maturing earlier. Many sixth form and college teachers have however sensed a youth culture change shared by many young people.

Sarah Irwin deals with these important and timely issues in this oddly titled book. However, the style in which she does so will put off all but the most persistent reader. This is not her fault but that of the present system of Ph.D. study in higher education, which requires a review of the literature that is then regurgitated unchanged in books like this.

The way in which such theses are supervised also means that the actual 'original research' they contain is limited to what individual poorly-funded and unsupported post-graduates can carry out on their own. In Irwin's case a strange sample of 92 16-35 year olds working in insurance, retailing and construction in and around Edinburgh in 1988 but interestingly including 20 of their parents. Unfortunately, this excluded the long-term unemployed who are, as Irwin says, the focus of most concern.

The rituals of Ph. D. examination, plus further delays involved in publishing them, means that the research reported is outdated and lacks any references to recent publications. In the end, the only readers obliged to plough through such tomes are the students following 'the course of the book' that their authors' Doctorates qualify them to teach.

All this is a pity because this author at least has important things to say, particularly about the rising age of marriage from its low point of average age 22 for women in 1970. For concurrently women's wages have improved relative to men. Irwin points out that this relates not just to supply and demand but to the assumption that young people and women need less money because they are supposed to be dependent upon others. It is the way this is reflected as 'right or wrong' in the excerpts from interviews with her sample that occasionally enliven her text which justifies the 'Rights' of her title.

However, unlike another book by the same publisher Bob Coles's discussion of 'Youth and Social Policy' - Irwin does not raise the question of citizenship

rights for all young people. This again relates to her orthodox sociological approach which accepts popular definitions of social class as either 'middle' or 'working' leaving unexamined the fracturing of both groups and the possibility that certain patterns - of early pregnancy, for example- are normal for some fractions but no longer for others.

***Patrick Ainley** works at the University of Greenwich.*

Ross A. Thompson
Preventing Child Maltreatment through Social Support : A Critical Analysis
Sage 1995
ISBN 0-803-95595-2
£16.50 (pbk)
pp 224

Linda Winkley
Emotional Problems in Children and Young People
Cassell 1996
ISBN 0-304-32569-4
pp 328

JOHN HORNCASTLE

Chalk and cheese. These two volumes could hardly portray better the disparity of approaches to understanding and helping children and young people exhibiting behaviour difficulties or in danger of abuse.

The academic 'chalk' is provided by Thompson, an American psychologist with a surprisingly wide ecological view. He suggests that families are affected by the stresses of unemployment, poverty, life in criminogenic surroundings, poor housing and education, and examines in particular the evidence that lack of social support and isolation are contributory to incidents of child abuse.

Arguments for the provision of social support - defined principally by Thompson as support from neighbours, friends and kin - are strong; it is an uncontroversial method of approach, financially undemanding, informal, part of the local community, and requiring little training. The attraction is even clearer when juxtaposed with the questionable, expensive, formal, alien professionalism of social work agencies. Research studies are also quoted which indicate that social support enhances social and psychological health, whereas isolation tends towards a breakdown in these areas of functioning.

However, Thompson is not afraid to write on his board some of the difficulties and contradictions in his approach. Since other research (e.g. Parton, 1985) suggests that child abuse is strongly related to class, inequality and poverty, both in terms of prevalence and severity, the social milieux in

which prospective abusers live may be one in which social networks are weak and may be difficult to improve. There may typically be a shifting population, a large amount of rented housing and a general lack of social provision in the area. The same neighbours who could potentially assist may themselves be stressed or a cause of stress and may be dependent on illegally-obtained drugs. Additionally, the assumption that kinship links are helpful is not necessarily true, and rejection or apathy from other family members may be more hurtful than if it came from a neighbour.

Despite his ecological perspective, Thompson admits that personal characteristics are an important element in the equation. For example, not all parents in deprived areas abuse their children, even though they may all be subjected to similar stressors. He also quotes research by Polansky indicating that neglectful mothers viewed their neighbourhood as unsupportive, while other mothers living in the same area saw it much more positively. Furthermore, some individuals - e.g. child sexual abusers - may not be accepted by a community, while some other individuals may not appear to welcome friendships.

Although not underlined in the book, issues around discrimination emerge - for example it appears that, compared to married parents, single mothers have smaller networks, characterised by more frequent turnover, and with other members of the network living with multiple stresses.

Thompson suggests a variety of methods for improving social support provision, and in chapter six examines two in detail. Somewhat oddly in view of his main thesis, these are relatively formal and individual rather than informal and global. He details the apparent success of home 'visitation' schemes by (mainly) health personnel, and the more uncertain results of intensive therapeutic and educational family programmes.

This is a thoughtful, searching and provocative book where questions inevitably seem better formulated than answers, and a thread of pessimism prevails. The latter is hardly surprising in view of the broad difficulties described, and the problems in effecting structural change. The author's conclusion is that a multi-strategy approach is required, but he appears to shy away from suggesting the more dramatic economic re-structuring which the ecological approach logically requires.

In contract, Winkley's slab appears to be confident and assured. An English psychiatrist, she writes for an audience of teachers, and her base is psychodynamic. The book is highly structured, plainly written, and begins with a description of the healthy child development process from infancy to teen age. Later chapters include sections on a large number of common and uncommon problem behaviours. These travel from aggression through eating disorders to autism and obsessions; there is a chapter on substance misuse with an extremely useful list of common drugs and their effects (including crack and ecstasy). A section discussing bereavement helpfully considers the teacher's role when a child in class had experienced a death, while a further examination of bullying complements the current occupation with the topic, and the Department for Education's initiatives in the areas.

Each chapter concludes with an extensive book list, and relevant legislation is included as an Appendix. This is a book which can be used consistently as a reference, and the inclusion of around forty case examples (chiefly successful) gives some impression of the type of intervention available.

Nevertheless, despite the many virtues of this book, omissions and lack of balance make it less palatable. For example, there is no mention whatever of social workers in education (except in the Appendix), despite discussion of such topics as school refusal, bullying and abuse - in all of which situations they would routinely become involved. This appears to be an unfortunate omission, in view of the importance of inter-disciplinary working.

Additionally, some would question the inferences drawn from the case examples in respect of gender roles; although there is occasional reference to the importance of a father, wherever therapy is offered to someone other than the child it is always the mother. Whether or not this implies responsibilities for a child's disorder, it may appear to place an unfair burden for improvement on one parent alone.

However, one of the most significant features of the book, and a striking contrast to Thompson, is the lack of importance devoted to sociological factors - for example environmental pressures on parents or cultural influences on children - in considering the aetiology of problem behaviour. More frequently difficulties are ascribed to mothers being emotionally unavailable or having limited emotional resources.

Likewise, there appears to be an understandable but perhaps limiting concentration on psychodynamic individual therapy as preferred intervention for both mothers and children. While there are no doubt situations where this is appropriate, there are various alternatives - e.g. specialist groups for women and men - attendance at which might obviate the need to wait for individual therapy and would offer an alternative focus and style of intervention.

Both books have considerable merit - one as an examination of the meaning and validity of social support, and the other as a behavioural compendium. The fact that they can both be accepted as valid contributions to the literature of helping professionals, despite their different analyses of similar situations, illustrates the confusions and tensions inherent in social work practice. Gordon (1989) from her historical research into child protection agency records, writes the only fitting conclusion :

> *the most helpful social workers were those who understood family-violence problems to be simultaneously social/structural and personal in origin, and who therefore offered to help in both directions.*

References

Gordon, L. (1989) *Heroes of their own Lives : the Politics and History of Family Violence.* London, Virago.

Parton, N. (1985) *The Politics of Child Abuse.* Basingstoke, Macmillan.

John Horncastle *is Senior Lecturer in Social Work at the University of Portsmouth.*

Matthew Colton, Charlotte Drury, Margaret Williams
Staying Together : Supporting Families under the Children Act
Arena 1995
ISBN 1-85742-265-1 (pbk)
ISBN 1-85742-264-3 (hbk)
£12.95 (pbk)
pp 123

Ruth Sinclair and Roger Grimshaw
Planning and Reviewing Under the Children Act
National Children's Bureau
ISBN 1-874579-57-1
£14.50 (pbk)
pp 126

CLAUDIA BERNARD

The texts reviewed here are based on research addressing different aspects of the Children Act relating to the provision of services by local authorities to children and families. *Staying Together : Supporting Families under the Children Act* concentrates on Part III, Section 17, which is concerned with children in need and gives local authorities powers and duties to provide family support services. This book examines how local authority social services departments in Wales are implementing Section 17. It starts with a discussion of child care law and traces the development of services for children in need. Topics covered include : 'Agency Policy', 'Needs Assessment', 'Working in Partnership with Parents', 'Listening to Children', 'Inter-Agency Working', and 'Cultural Concerns'. Each section ends with the main messages from the research drawn out and with suggestions for good practice.

Overall, *Staying Together* is written in a clear and accessible style, and the authors make some interesting observations. Most notably, they observe that contrary to the spirit of the Act, children 'in need' find themselves having to be defined as being at risk of 'significant harm' before they receive any service. Local authorities' priorities are heavily skewed towards the sharp end of child protection work and there is a gulf between preventative family support services and child protection. They find that family support services are low on the agenda and some local authorities are making rather slow progress in developing children in need initiatives.

A particular strength of this book is that the authors devote two chapters to the views of parents and children. It is particularly pleasing to see children and young people's perspectives included in such research. However, what is lacking in *Staying Together* is a thorough analysis of how race and gender impact on access to welfare services. I found the chapter entitled 'cultural concerns' problematic in that all references to the issues and concerns of black and ethnic minority service users are explained as problems of culture. What is significant here is that reducing issues facing black and ethnic minority groups to 'cultural concerns' reinforces the idea

that only a cultural explanation is required to understand their experiences. The trouble with this perspective is that it does not situate black and minority experiences in the context of racism.

Whilst I concur with the authors' position that there are issues specific to black and ethnic minority groups, it is not helpful to highlight these issues solely from a cultural perspective. Because the authors fail to provide us with a thorough analysis of racism as a process of power, they do not enable us to further our understanding of how racism impacts on the interpretation of the rather nebulous concept 'in need'. Additionally, I found the authors use of the term 'non-white' to describe black and ethnic minority people off-putting and felt it reflected an attitude that was not only Eurocentric but also paternalistic.

Another limitation of the book is that is lacks an analysis of the way family support initiatives can reinforce gender inequalities. The use of the term 'parents' throughout the book implies that the authors are talking about mothers and fathers equally, as if parenting roles as they currently exist are somehow gender-neutral. That the vast majority of social work intervention with families centres on women in their role as mothers is not analysed by the authors.

Planning and Reviewing under the Children Act examines the implementation of planning and review provisions of children being looked after by local authorities. The book explores how the Department of Health's guidance and regulations are being translated into local policies and procedures. The research behind the book is being conducted in two phases and the first phase involved a documentation survey of all the social services departments in England and Wales. The second phase of the research will analyse data on the practice and planning from three local authorities. The findings of the first phase of the research are examined in this text.

Overall, Sinclair and Grimshaw provide the readers with a balanced and well-argued account of the issues they pursue. This is a well-written and informative text that sets the scene with a theoretical overview of the relevant conceptual themes and debates. The initial findings from the documentation survey indicate that many authorities have developed policies and procedures that reflect the requirements of the regulations and guidance and some are being quite creative in the way they interpret their duties.

As with *Staying Together*, the authors of *Planning and Reviewing under the Children Act* have found that there is a disjunction between legislation, regulations and practice. Their findings show that children and families are not being enabled sufficiently to participate fully in planning and reviewing processes. Though the Act asks local authorities to consider children's race, culture, language and religion when making decisions, these are not always addressed satisfactorily by some local authorities. The report concludes by suggesting a criterion for guiding the planning and review process involving openness and sharing, cogency, integration, flexibility, sensitivity, responsiveness and continuity.

Overall, this report is succinctly written and highlights a number of questions for local authorities to address. It provides a number of helpful pointers

towards improved implementation of the Act's planning and review provisions. If the authors deliver what they set out to do in the second phase of the research, then the final report should make compelling reading.

There is no doubt that research looking at the effectiveness of the Children Act in practice is to be welcomed as it may help us to identify areas of strength and consider areas needing improvement. Both books generally provide some timely messages for practice.

Despite the omissions in *Staying Together*, it is useful for examining the way family support initiatives are being developed. However, in terms of providing a thorough analysis of the experiences of particular groups of service users the reader is short-changed. *Planning and Reviewing under the Children Act* on the other hand, provides some sound pointers for effective practice and as such is essential reading for social policy makers, planners and practitioners.

Claudia Bernard *is a Lecturer in Social Work in the Department of Applied Human Sciences, Goldsmiths College, University of London.*

Mark Drakeford and Maurice Vanstone (Eds)
Beyond Offending Behaviour
ISBN 1 85742 238 4 (hbk)
ISBN 1 85742 239 2 (pbk)
£32.50 (hbk)
£14.95 (pbk)
pp 123

JACKIE GILCHRIST

In a time when the thinking of the New Right pervades criminology to the point where there are serious attempts to assert that whole races are more likely to be criminally minded it is refreshing to read a book as practical and reasoned as this.

Drakeford and Vanstone have gathered together articles from nine contributors (including themselves) all of whom are conversant with current criminological debates and appear to have good knowledge of current day to day practice within the probation service. The articles centre around areas of every day life such as housing, health and employment and attempts to examine the impact of these 'key social systems' on the lives of people who appear before the courts and at the end of each article is a short comment by the editors. Each article attempts to provide an analysis of the current state of affairs within a key social system charting the new right influences amongst the remnants of the welfare state. This is however a realistic analysis, not one which harks back to any 'golden age' but also not one which seeks to appease those who toe the new right party line in the probation service.

Of particular interest to me, and I would guess to most probation officers who have worked in probation areas with an active anti-poverty strategy, is the article by Jon Arnold and Bill Jordan dealing with poverty. Their

analysis seems more deterministic than structural in places but they argue convincingly that the government's actions in the field of welfare rights and employment have done more to strengthen an 'underclass' attitude than to combat it thus pushing claimants into bending the rules in an attempt to maintain or supplement their income.

> *To confront offending behaviour by crude juxtaposition of offence and penal consequences, even to educate about some of the less obvious longer term consequences of crime (for others and the victims), scarcely addresses the problem. If lawful behaviour pays as little as it does under the British Government, crime does not have to pay much to be a rational strategy (Arnold and Jordan, p. 40)*

Thus, they argue, the probation service becomes part of the system which criminalises the poor. Hence probation officers who place their hopes in rehabilitation of the offender by attempting to steer them back to the mainstream via ET, YTS and a nice little job supplemented by family credits will have very little credence with their more vulnerable clients. They argue the way to combat poverty in a realistic way which will help the clients of the probation service is to follow the line of the voluntary agencies who have become involved in the real networks and coping systems of clients in their own communities. Initiatives such as credit unions, co-operatives and work bartering networks make more sense to the probation client than government run initiatives such as jobclubs and back to work schemes.

> *In an absolutely general sense, unless they can be enabled, encouraged and given some resources of their own choosing, they will inevitably become the predators on the edges of the grazing herds of property owning democrats. The deeply offensive image of young criminals as hyenas is a self fulfilling prophecy: given no other role, that is what they will become. The Probation Service should be in the vanguard of those seeking to support the self organising, self defining, self respecting action of such people. (Arnold and Jordan, p. 41)*

This particular article sets out, by the authors own admission, to be shocking, in an attempt, I think, to jolt people out of the rut of dealing with poverty in the probation client group in a piecemeal fashion. The editors' comments are somewhat less radical in tone and encourage service initiatives which tackle poverty both on an individual level (such as partnership agreements with voluntary welfare rights agencies) and on a collective level.

I strongly recommend this book for tired and jaded probation officers who might garner some hope from it but I would recommend it even more strongly to those who have some energy and want to gain a perspective on their job beyond monitoring and form filling. Like the editors I do not believe there ever was a golden age of probation and I cannot see the probation service reverting to its pre-Thatcherite form. Practice in those days appeared to be based on social deterministic or left idealist views of the causes of crime reflecting the current criminological debates of the day. It is to the credit of practitioners, rather than those in the driving seat of the probation service, that current practice in the probation service

does not entirely reflect new right criminological views. This is a book which will strengthen practitioners in their attempt to carry on giving the clients of probation a quality service.

Jackie Gilchirst *recently left the Probation Service to follow a freelance lecturing career in social sciences and social work studies.*

Keith Popple
Analysing Community Work : Its Theory and Practice
Open University Press 1995
ISBN 0-335-19408-7
pp 131

MAE SHAW

In his introduction to this substantive book, Keith Popple sets himself a task which, although modestly expressed, constitutes a unique addition to contemporary community work literature. His aim is to make a 'small contribution' to the knowledge base and debate in community work, add to the literature, locate community work within a theoretical base as an important and useful activity, and, as a result, to sharpen community work's critical edge.

He then goes on to assemble a range of paradigms and critiques which offer us the means to locate and evaluate those purposes and functions which, he argues, constitute the evolution of modern community work. The book is divided into seven chapters which deal broadly with historical, theoretical and practice developments, and the author attempts at regular intervals to rehearse the relationships between them.

Committed as he is from the outset to the necessity of locating community work in both political and theoretical terms, Popple seeks to define it in a way which acknowledges both its ambiguity and ambivalence. In asserting that community work is 'an area of practice', the book places the role of the practitioner at the centre of analysis in a way which acknowledges the historical and policy context within which professional community work has developed. Similarly, problematising the notion of 'community' forces a confrontation with the politics of practice rather than an uneasy collusion with the sanitising additive of 'community'.

In view of this it seems odd that he ties his colours, however loosely, to what is an essentially consensual definition of community work (p. 5). This assumes that it operates to promote the interests of 'the disadvantaged' and thus creates an inconsistency which is never quite resolved. As the author acknowledges, community work *is* ambivalent; a central tenet of the radical critiques he presents is that, within the dominant pluralist paradigm, it can be seen to shore up existing unequal power relationships and to integrate 'deficit' cultures as a means of managing potential dissent. The need

for theoretical understandings, therefore, arises from the fact that community work *can't* be understood simply by reference to professional discourse and objectives but requires an engagement with broader social processes i.e. community work needs to be *located in order to be defined.* The starting point for critical analysis is surely the positioning of community work as 'pivotal within civil society'. Often employed by the state to play a part in maintaining the social system, community workers also have opportunities to 'work alongside members of communities as they articulate their contradictory understanding of the world and their situation within it.' (p. 46)

Despite such problems of definition, however, a dialectical approach is reflected in much of the book and succeeds in moving beyond the dichotomous thinking which has characterised much community work literature. In this respect, the book offers, I think, a unique contribution to existing literature since it seeks to reconstruct and consolidate critical approaches without polarising debates. In this sense it is essentially conciliatory rather than confrontational, whilst rejecting any temptation to conceal differences. For example, the dynamic of pluralism is harnessed to the explanatory force of Marxism, as a way of reconfiguring a new cultural politics, with the intellectual support of Gramsci. Whilst the debate between modernist and post-modernist positions is (surprisingly) not mentioned by name, the eclectic nature of the arguments clearly owes much to it. It is this eclecticism, and the impressive familiarity with a wide range of literature which is particularly refreshing about this book. Whilst there is always the danger for eclecticism to slip into relativism, Popple avoids this, introducing the reader instead to a wide range of new and old sources. The twenty pages of references alone, all evidenced in the text, make this an essential source for students of community work and those interested in 'community' as policy.

The practice section is less strong than the historical and theoretical. As Popple himself recognises, the division between theory and practice 'is in one sense artificial as theory and practice are inextricably linked' (p.96). This separation in the text makes that connection more difficult to sustain, despite attempts to link particular discussions to practice developments. The section on management, for example, would have been strengthened by reference to the ideological and theoretical developments of the 'new managerialism' which, it could be argued, drives the activities and concerns of community work in a way which traditional models of community work (p. 56) do not address. The models highlighted in the text, whilst refreshingly freed from the assumed ideological baggage of previous frameworks, nevertheless lack a conceptual coherence which would enhance their analytical utility. The clarification of purposes of particular models in particular contexts would have helped to locate them.

Quoting Waddington (p. 23) he argues that 'many community work activities, as we originally conceived them, have simply lost their point. Our current predicament is that we are no longer collectively quite sure of what we are trying to do or how to do it'. The social reform of the pre-Thatcher years provided the rationale for community work's distributive function. This accurately reflects the dilemma of contemporary community work with its ragbag of influences and purposes derived largely from liberal philosophies.

The place of community work in a restructured and marketised welfare system needs to be redefined if it is to retain its critical edge. Recognition of the potential in the gap between the intentions and outcomes of policy remain as crucial as ever. 'The generic and contested nature of community work (means) that it (is) vulnerable to ideological change' (p. 97). The recognition of its value by the State in the current context can be seen to reflect this i.e. the way in which community workers continue to be expected to deliver 'the community' as a substitute for state-funded services.

In a very effective attempt to theorise his own position in relation to biography and professional practice, Popple explains how, for him, the dominant pluralist paradigm in community work became inadequate as a way of empowering people when 'the very people for whom we were supposed to be working were having their life chances reduced by circumstances complete outside their control' (p. 101). Similarly, he rejects the orthodox Marxist position as it 'failed to connect with my own growing understanding of the problems faced by vulnerable communities'. Turning instead to Gramsci and Freire, he develops an argument which is focused upon 'struggle and contradiction' as an alternative to determinist and monolithic views of the state. (p. 102). The recognition that community is in an intermediary position between the possibilities for action and the structural constraints upon it offers a strategic position for community workers to 'create conditions to assist members of communities to articulate their own contradictory experiences and understandings of the world' (p. 99).

The book is infused with the imperative to 'retain a degree of optimism and hope in the most difficult of circumstances' (p. 101) and the need for intellectual resources to sustain that optimism. This is a significant contribution to the development of these resources; generative rather than prescriptive. Popple is to be congratulated for embarking on this task of helping to sharpen community work's critical edge and there is much for the reader to engage or take issue with. There has been a vacuum in critical community work literature of this kind in the last decade and hopefully, having 'pushed the boat out for a more developed and critical examination of the activity' (p. 104), others will take to the oars.

Mae Shaw *: Lecturer in Community Work, Moray House Institute of Education, Edinburgh.*

Walter Forde
Growing Up In Ireland - The Development of Irish Youth Services
Kara Publications, Wexford Ireland (1995)

PAT DOLAN

Very little has been written in Ireland about the needs and rights of adolescents. This publication is very timely appearing at a point in Irish society where child protection and adolescent welfare are central topics within the public domain. Fr. Forde tracks the development of Irish Youth services over the last twenty years and then goes on to address the core functions of youth

work prior to focusing on how adolescents perceive their current and future role in Irish society.

Apart from giving a brief history of social policy developments in youth work, the role of former and current Irish government ministers are also discussed. A typical scenario is presented to the reader of how various reports have produced recommendations in respect of youth work provision and though much was promised little was delivered. The efforts of two former Presidents of Ireland, Mr. Childers and Mr. O Dalaigh as well as our current Taoiseach (Prime Minister) John Bruton are cited and praised, as people who in their earlier political careers attempted to address (with limited success), the needs of young people. Various reports are cited by the author as important in respect of the development of Irish youth work policies, including 'A National Youth Policy' (1971), 'The Costello Report' (1984) and more recently the 'Department of Education Green Paper' (1992).

Apart from discussing social policy and youth work, the author addresses simple yet key questions in this book, such as what are the needs of young people in Ireland? and what is youth work? He goes on to discuss youth services in the context of invaluable voluntary informal youth work provision such as the youth clubs movement and also in the framework of more formal professional youth work services such as the National Youth Federation and Foroige or state controlled services such as Neighbourhood Youth Projects and Youth Encounter Projects. All the above inputs are in the main preventive and geared towards 'at risk adolescents' providing them with group diversion programmes and individual support and counselling. Other services which are aimed directly at providing alternatives for those who have already come into the criminal justice system are also given some attention in the book. In particular Fr. Forde cites the work of Irish Youth Foundation as a great asset in the provision of youth services.

The role of the church in respect of young people is given a significant amount of attention. The author describes how he perceives young people as being disillusioned with the trappings or institution of the church in Ireland. This he says has in part led to a sense of alienation for young people. On a more positive note Fr. Forde suggests that young people are very resourceful and have interest and insight into their own spirituality. He further suggests that if the church becomes more in touch with young people's needs then religion and spirituality can become more of a resource for Irish adolescents.

Fr. Forde also discusses the perceptions of young people in respect of their role and future in Irish society. The results of an attitudinal study are cited and described as providing a 'bleak picture' of young people disillusioned about their prospects (70% of young people surveyed said that Ireland does not hold a future for them). However the author rightly points out that young people also see themselves as having some of the solutions to current problems, and if given the chance would not make the same mistakes their elders have made. Throughout Forde reminds us of the much used phrase in Ireland that our youth are our assets and should be treated accordingly - with respect and care.

I found Rev. Forde's account of Youth Services in Ireland informative and

useful both as a youth work practitioner and as a service manager. I think this book would be of particular benefit to service administrators and newly qualified youth workers keen to learn the basics of how youth services have developed and operated in Ireland over the last twenty years. However this book should not be seen as a panacea in respect of how to work with adolescents, rather I found it to be more of a general guide to Irish youth work.

Whereas the book focuses on many key questions in respect of youth work, I think the author could have explored some current topical issues such as training for youth workers, gender issues and safe practices for workers in the whole area of child and adolescent protection. Also although Rev. Forde explores the vocational aspects of youth work I would have been interested to hear more of his views on the issue of voluntarism versus professionalism. The role of the National Youth Council of Ireland which I believe has had mixed fortunes in respect of its umbrella of youth organisations function could also have been discussed further by the author. In conclusion, I found 'Growing Up In Ireland - The Development of Irish Youth Services' to be a very good book which provided me with plenty of useful information and insight into current youth service provision in Ireland.

Pat Dolan *: Project Teacher, Galway Neighbourhood Youth Project and National Spokesperson, Irish Association of Care Workers.*

Malcolm Payne
Linkages - Effective Networking in Social Care
Whiting & Birch Ltd
Human Sciences Publishers
ISBN 1-871177-34-0

BREN COOK

The language and actions of budgetary reductionism have set in motion a climate of decreasing local authority spending on important services, whilst the needs of the weakest in society are piling up at the door of a whole range of agencies that are charged with their support. This inconsistency of funding is forcing agencies, voluntary as well as statutory, and to some extent isolated individual carers, to look to each other to begin to provide a comprehensive level of support and care.

Networking is nothing new but joint working seems to be increasingly inevitable and just as within the Youth Work field the amounts of partnerships and consortia are burgeoning. The notion of networking has been around a long time and for some organisations it has become part of the culture but for those that are new or want to improve their networking performance Payne's book is a reasonable primer.

'Linkages' is a slim volume consisting of 15 chapters that take you through the typical stages that a potential link generator would go through. It looks at the components of networks and analyses the joints that hold the web together, as well as the roles and skills involved in linking and maintaining the network.

Coming out of informal papers for voluntary organisations the book aims to give a practical guide to the practice of making links. It gives the impression that it is aimed at people just beginning to create links and have not really done it before. The chapters are short and 'punchy' with a set of exercises at the end of each one that reinforce the content and engage the reader in their thinking and position concerning their practice. It is possible to imagine basing a training programme around the exercises or using the book in an open learning situation.

One of the problems that arose with the book was its lack of context, which is inevitable when you try to engage as wide an audience as the publication is meant to reach. If you accept the premise that networking is for everyone then the corollary is that a book about it will be non specific.

However, the lack of context gives the reader a feeling of vagueness when trying to relate the theory to their situation. The text comes alive when Payne uses examples of his work with voluntary organisations and the book would have benefited overall with more of them.

Some of the chapters are surprisingly basic and deal with issues that someone very new to 'people work' would need to know; this coupled with the exercises make a useful beginner's guide to networking, however the opportunity to offer a critique of the social and economic realities has been missed. Whilst the attempt to analyse the process of creating the links between individuals, organisations and agencies are laudable some discussion about the macro political and economic picture would have been welcomed, even if it was just an acknowledgement that 'times were hard and that we shouldn't let them grind us down'.

There is a feeling of 'whiteness' about the book and there doesn't seem to be a high priority placed on exploring the difficulties of black groups making linkages with white groups. To be fair, Payne does point out that there is an issue to be resolved about colluding with racism, sexism or ablism, on the one hand, and the need to establish the links, on the other. He then goes on to state his position but leaves it largely up to the reader to make up their mind. I would like to have seen a more realistic expose of the potential struggles for certain disadvantaged groups when interfacing with others.

Overall the book is a focused piece which looks at how to go about creating the links which to some extent we do instinctively.

Payne has to some extent stated the obvious but in doing so is opening up the possibility to an audience wider than specialists or professionals (though this book would not be lost on some of us). It is a book with potential (not in the least with training establishments) and it is accessible enough for voluntary groups or local pressure groups to use positively.

I would like to propose a follow-up book that discusses the wider issues about networking so that we can be clear that it is a vital human activity and not simply a survival strategy in response to a social policy that disenfranchises some sections in society.

***Bren Cook** is an Area Training Co-ordinator for Lancashire Youth and Community Service*

Alan Dearling and Howie Armstrong
with cartoons by Gubby
World Youth Games
Russel House Publishing Ltd.
ISBN 1-89824-50-3
£9.95

JIM CLARK

This book from the same authors as the *New Youth Games Book* is another very useful and practical resource text for those who find themselves working with young people in a variety of contexts. It has drawn together a vast range of games, as the title suggests from around the world and new and traditional games from a mix of cultural groups.

The book is well constructed, the three sections *The World of Youth Games, The World of Activities and the World of Relationship Games* are very accessible. A worker or facilitator could dip into the text for session ideas in a very short amount of time. It is also accessible to young people themselves; my son on seeing it was really keen to read and play some of the games. I've borrowed it back to finish this review!

The range of materials is impressive ranging as it does from table top games and less active games, useful on wet days in schools, home etc. My kids enjoyed them on one wet day while I was trying to write a chapter for a book way behind my agreed deadline so thanks Alan and Howie. Section Two has more highly active and group orientated games including a range unknown to me which looked worthwhile exploring. The final section has a strong focus on the building of relationships with and within groups of young people. They are intended to develop trust etc. I'm never sure about these ideas in relation to games but I know others are convinced by them. This is again a well constructed section and will no doubt be useful to those who dare!

The book contains many familiar games too and sets out the various versions that have developed which makes for interesting reading. It was also good to see the writers acknowledging the development of games and those who had created or developed them. Those of us old enough to remember the days when we played in the streets will know many of these games.

I'm very impressed with this practical text and would finally want to congratulate Gubby on cartoons that are sensitively drawn and provided both energy to

and support for the ideas of the writers. They make the text accessible and entertaining to read, whilst providing pictures of the games for the readers to hold in their head.

I would recommend this book to teachers, youth workers, play workers, parents and anyone else who wants to play with young people. Sorry, have to finish here. My son wants the book back to check how you play Kabaddi. What did you say happened to the ball you were throwing over the roof - you were playing What!!!!!

***Jim Clark** is Head of Arts Education in the Faculty of Health, Social Work and Education at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle.*

Gilbert J. Botvin, Steven Schinke, Mario A. Orlandi (eds)
Drug Abuse Prevention with Multiethnic Youth
Sage Publications 1995
ISBN 0-8039-5712-2
£21.59 (pbk)
pp 359

SHANE BUTLER

At both national and international levels, drug problems are still regarded by political leaders as being foremost amongst the vast array of difficulties confronting young people. The Irish Government, for instance, has decided to identify the 'drug problem' as one of its priority issues for its presidency of the European Union, during the second half of 1996. It is difficult, however, to take political activity of this type seriously, and easy to regard it as mere posturing or rhetoric. This American text on the prevention of drug problems in a multiethnic society illustrates the difficulties for social scientists in producing drug prevention policies or programmes in a society where political leaders (at least while they remain in office) lack the courage to question the fundamental tenets of the existing 'War on Drugs'.

In a British text on this topic it would, by now, be commonplace to hear it argued that the use of illicit substances by young people has become a mainstream normative activity; such an argument would generally make the point that most such drug use is not problematic. In reading the book under review, however, one is left with the impression that American researchers in this field are largely compelled to toe the existing policy line if they are to avail themselves of research grants. Newcomb, in an excellent chapter on the etiology of drug use, remarks briefly that the factors which lead to teenage drug use are likely to be very different from the factors which lead to 'drug abuse and dependence'; however, this 'vital research agenda was directly thwarted by political demands to make no distinctions between teenage use and abuse of drugs' (p.108).

The topic of ethnic identity and its relationship to drug use and drug prevention is the central theme of this book; much of the material is interesting and

raises questions for European drug programmes, but, ultimately, no startling new findings are presented or clear cut recommendations made other than that all demand reduction activity (whether aimed at families, communities or schools) must be sensitive to the cultural needs of its target groups. A good example of the quality of the research presented is contained in Kandel's chapter on ethnic differences in drug use; this, as one would expect of a social scientist of her calibre, is a subtle and nuanced teasing out of the implications of the finding that blacks report lower lifetime rates of drug use than whites or Hispanics, while paradoxically being over-represented in health-care and criminal justice populations.

Throughout this book, however, the idea that race is some kind of independent explanatory variable is treated with great caution, and generally the authors recognise the complexity of the equation where individual, familial and communal factors must all be taken into account. The centrality of socio-economic factors is not overlooked, and there is a brief but compellingly honest chapter on the difficulties of conducting research in ethnic minority communities. The authors of this chapter, the Fulliloves, describe their research into the health status of residents of Harlem. Despite their familiarity with Harlem, and the fact that they themselves are African American, they were taken aback by the opinions and objections of local residents with whom they discussed their research. The conventional academic approach to medico-social research of this kind seemed most unconvincing to the Harlem resident with whom the Fulliloves met; it was suggested to the researchers that the eventual findings of their study were blindingly obvious - poverty was at the root of all their other difficulties and perhaps the money allocated to research might be better spent on direct service provision. This account of research in Harlem, it must be said, was reminiscent for this reviewer of research into the prevalence of drug use in some of Dublin's poorer areas, where socio-economic factors alone appear to be significant.

In overall terms, however, this book is of limited value for readers outside the United States. The scholarship is impressive and the presentation of material of a high standard, but much of the detail on specific ethnic groups within the US is of little relevance to those who live and work elsewhere. There are, in fairness, several chapters which look at general risk factors and protective factors, or which review broad areas - such as prevention in community settings or family support services - which are extremely interesting and helpful. In particular, the chapter by the Fulliloves, which has already been mentioned, and a later chapter by Pentz suggest that the political dimension to drug problems is finally being addressed more explicitly by American researchers.

***Shane Butler** is a lecturer in Social Studies at Trinity College, Dublin.*

Kimberley K. Leonard, Carl E. Pope and William H. Feyerherm (eds)
Minorities in Juvenile Justice
Sage 1995
ISBN 0-8039-7265-2
£17.50 (pbk)
pp 240

STEVE ROGOWSI

It is generally accepted that black people are disadvantaged as suspects and defendants as far as the criminal and juvenile justice systems are concerned. This book as the title indicates deals with minorities in juvenile justice and is timely. It is based on research carried out in the U.S.A. and thus is primarily for that market being an edited collection that looks at racial difference in, for example, encounters with police, urban juvenile courts, in confinement and punishment, and among groups within juvenile justice.

The preface rightly points out that young offenders are increasingly seen as accountable for their actions, deemed culpable and treated punitively. As minority young offenders are more often recipients of harsher treatment then reforms of juvenile justice are needed. In 1988 the U.S. Congress required states to investigate the over-representation of minority young offenders in confinement and develop plans to remedy this. Soon after, two of this books editors carried out an extensive literature review into juvenile processing identifying the need for research. This book outlines some of the resulting research including six chapters devoted to the findings from research studies in various states. Each of these studies includes a literature review, followed by details of the research designs and methodology, the findings and recommendations. The book ends with strategies for further research into the over-representation of minorities in juvenile justice as well as steps to overcome racial bias in juvenile justice processing. It might be useful to comment on a couple of the studies.

Thus, chapter two concerns a study of whether and to what extent Florida's civil and criminal justice systems were influenced by racial and ethnic bias. There were attempts to identify the influence of race at several points in the processing and from this it emerges that all the juvenile justice officials believed race was a factor in this processing. There was, not surprisingly, individual and institutional racism. From this emerge policy recommendations such as procedures for the juvenile justice system to require reporting, investigating and responding to professionals whose decisions appear to have been racist. Another is for the development of a race, ethnic and cultural diversity curriculum that all personnel in the juvenile justice system must complete.

Chapter five examines the role of race in juvenile justice in Pennsylvania finding that minority youths are over-represented in court, as well as being detained at a greater rate than whites. There are also more restrictive outcomes for minority youths at all stages of the juvenile justice system. Again the policy recommendations leave something to be desired. They merely refer to the need for periodic training for all juvenile justice personnel, employing personnel with training and life experiences from other countries, and complaints procedures regarding racism and sexism.

It is not only African Americans that are over-represented in the juvenile justice system as the chapter on American Indian youths indicates. This study took place in Wisconsin finding that such youths were more likely to receive more serious outcomes at several decision points in the system. Also at no single decision point were white youths found to be at a disadvantage when compared to them.

The final chapter looks at changes needed for the future both in the juvenile justice system itself and in the environment in which it operates. As for the former, for example, there is a need for monitoring and examination of the system, implementation of a research plan to test the racial bias hypothesis, and training workshops. As for the latter there is a need to eradicate the inner city conditions of poverty and unemployment. It is noted that the structural and economic realities of the urban ghettos are driving forces for entry into both adult and juvenile justice systems. This is all well and good but is merely stated, not elaborated on and the book abruptly ends.

Overall I am not too happy with this book. As suggested above it seems to leave open the question as to whether the juvenile justice system is biased against minorities (surely it is!). And, although mention is made of factors outside the juvenile justice system impinging on differential delinquency and thus differential incarceration rates and that these need to be addressed, this is merely done in passing. There could surely have been more discussion of this. Finally, although complaints procedures and training courses might be of help in ensuring the equal treatment of minorities in juvenile justice they do not go far enough. Although it might sound Utopian it is only when steps are taken towards ensuring a fair, just and equal society that such unequal treatment of minorities will cease.

Steve Rogowski *is a Social Worker, Children and Families with a local authority in the North West of England.*

SHORT CUTS

Tyrell Burgess, Michael Locke, John Pratt and Nick Richards
Degrees East: The Making of the University of East London 1892-1992
Athlone 1995
ISBN 0-485-12092-5
£9.95
pp 282

John Harland, Kay Kinder and Kate Hartley
Arts in their View: A study of youth participation in the Arts
NFER 1995
ISBN 0-7005-1369-8
£10.00
pp 296
Available from NFER Publications, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2DQ

Philip Kasinitz
Metropolis: Centre and symbol of our times
Macmillan 1995
ISBN 0-333-62127-1
£15.99
pp 498

Stanford M. Lyman (ed).
Social Movements: Critiques, concepts, case studies
Macmillan 1995
ISBN 0-333-62019-4
£15.99
pp 462

Howard Parker, Fiona Measham, Judith Aldridge
Drugs Futures: Changing patterns of drug use amongst English youth.
ISBN 0-948-83023-9
£15.00
pp 30
Available ISDD, 32-36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EC

MARK SMITH AND TONY JEFFS

Degrees East is one of the first of many accounts, we suspect, of the development of the 'new' universities. It is included here as it provides good background reading to one of the few recent British studies of the experience of students in mass higher education, Patrick Ainley's (1994) *Degrees of Difference*. The University of East London ('Inner City University') was one of the two institutions examined. The problem with histories of universities is that they are often rather descriptive - and are of more interest to those that have been to, or worked in the institutions than to others. This particular book has the virtue of avoiding the self-congratulatory tone that can be found in some; pays careful attention to the local context in which the institution grew, and sets it within wider policy concerns such as those around the development of the 'new polytechnics'. Some care has been taken here,

however, the book as a whole lacks analysis. It would have been useful if the writers could have addressed some of the questions raised by Ainley and examined in more detail the dynamics that have fuelled university expansion.

John Harland et al have provided us with a much needed overview of young people's participation in the arts. This is a substantial piece of work involving interviews with some 700 14 to 24 year olds in five regions of England. The book follows a pretty standard research report format (including as an appendix the full interview schedule). In the substantial 'findings' section, for example, we have chapters dealing with current leisure interests; young people's perceptions of being 'imaginative' and 'creative'; participation in specific art forms; encountering and consuming the arts; meanings and values attached to the arts; arts during the school years, and beyond; and on effects, opportunities, influences and needs. On the basis of this the writers develop some useful lines of analysis around attitudes and arts biographies. Questions are developed around young people's definitions of the 'arts' (a fairly limited perspective), the main variables in participation, the impact of schools and youth provision.

A new series of edited collections *Main Trends in the Modern World* from Macmillan brings together some classic and rather more unknown pieces clustered around some key themes. In the first, *Metropolis* (edited by Philip Kasinitz) we find a series of essays dealing with the nature of the city. Many of the key figures are represented here: Mumford, Simmel, Wirth, Corbusier, Berman, Gans, Sennett and so on. The selection of pieces in this respect is good. At a personal level we would have liked to see more made of the Chicago tradition (although Wirth was included); material concerning the development of Southern/Third World cities; and a better focus on interaction (it would have been nice to have something from Erving Goffman). Further attention also needed to be paid to the work of social geographers such as David Harvey and social critics such as Elizabeth Wilson. However, collections such as this will always have their limitations - and for what it does include it is to be commended.

Social Movements, edited by Stanford M. Lyman is the second of the texts in the series. It provides a useful complement to *Metropolis.* Sharing the same basic format it bring together classical, recent and contemporary analyses of social movements. The roll call of contributor's pieces will give a flavour of the quality: Park, Salaomon, Blumer, Piven and Cloward, Boggs, Bauman and Tourraine all have important pieces included. Like the other book it has a distinctively Western/North American focus - but nevertheless provides readers with a good place to start to look at the original analyses.

Based on a survey of 700 young people living in the North West of England over a three year period *Drug Futures* provides an illuminating insight into patterns of usage. The accessibility of drugs as well as the high levels of recreational use by those approaching the end of their school careers will surprise only those who have steadfastly refused to discuss this issue with young people. This is an important study because of the challenge it makes to those who so resolutely refuse to engage in a public debate regarding what a realistic drugs policy might be.

Mark Smith & Tony Jeffs

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual Subscription *(4 Issues)*

Academic Institutions, Libraries and Statutory Agencies £43.00

Individuals, Youth & Community Organisations and Voluntary Agencies.........£25.00

Prices include UK second class postage.

Overseas

E.C. ....Add £3.00 postage   Elsewhere ....Add £6.00 postage

Single Issues and Back Issues *(as available)*

Academic Institutions, Statutory Organisations and Libraries

Numbers 9-50..£9.00

Numbers 51 onwards...£10.00

Individuals & Youth and Community Agencies

Numbers 9-50..£5.00

Numbers 51 onwards...£6.00

Prices include UK second class postage.

Overseas

E.C. ....Add £0.75 postage   Elsewhere ....Add £1.50 postage

Subscribe to **Youth & Policy** by completing the order form below and sending to:

Youth & Policy Subscriptions, 10 Lady Beatrice Terrace,
New Herrington, Houghton le Spring, Tyne & Wear, DH4 4NE, UK.

Name..

Address...

....

....

I wish to subscribe to Youth & policy.   I enclose £ ....

Please send me back issues nos:..   I enclose £ ....

Postage (overseas only)   £ ....

Total Remittance enclosed £ ....

Please send me an index (issues 9-45)   ❑   (tick box)

I require a receipt   ❑   (tick box)

Cheques made payable to 'Youth & Policy' SEND REMITTANCE WITH ALL ORDERS.

SUBMISSION DETAILS

Subscriptions: Annual subscriptions (of 4 issues) for statutory organisations, academic institutions and libraries £43, youth and community organisations and individuals £25, overseas add £3 postage EC, £6 postage elsewhere.

Advertising: Details of rates, deadlines available from Lucy Ford.

Reviews: Suggestions for future review material and names of possible contributors to Tony Jeffs.

Working Space: is the section of the journal which aims to reflect: Current practice done by or with young people; and opinions on issues facing young people. Contributions can be written in whatever style the contributor feels comfortable with. For further details contact Richard Barber or Tia Khan.

Articles: of normally between 2,500 and 8,000 words should be sent to Sarah Banks, Umme Imam or Ruth Gilchrist. They should take an analytical approach to theoretical, practical and/or policy issues concerning young people in society. On receipt of the article the author will be notified whether it is being considered for publication. This process involves the editorial group seeking comments from three referees.

All articles must be typed with double spacing on white paper and authors should send three copies. ***We also encourage the submission of the final text on computer disk*** (3.5 inch) saved in 'text'/ASCII format (please enclose adequate instructions for our typesetters). Attention must be paid to our statement concerning equal opportunities and offensive language; contributors should adopt the house style of the journal laid out below:

Single quotation marks should be used unless quoting within a quote, where double quotation marks should be used. Indented quotes do not require quotation marks but where a quote is presented within an indented quote, single quotation marks should be used. Abbreviations that have attained common usage can be used (e.g.USA) but those which are less well known should be spelled out in the first instance with the abbreviated form following in parentheses, e.g. British Youth Council (BYC). The abbreviated form can be used thereafter. Tables, graphs and diagrams should be set out clearly and included in the relevant place in the text. Subheadings should be clearly marked and underlined. References should be set out in the Harvard system. Thus, the author's name, date of publication and, if necessary, page number should be included in parentheses in the main text, for example, (Smith, 1984, p.10). All references should be listed at the end of the article, with the title 'References', in alphabetical order by author's surname and including publication details.

Thus, for a book:
Hutson, S., and Jenkins, R. (1989) *Taking the Strain: Families, Unemployment and the Transition to Adulthood,* Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

For an article:
Willis, P. (1984) 'Youth Unemployment: Thinking the Unthinkable', in *Youth and Policy,* vol.2, no.4, pp. 17-24.

And for a report:
The Thompson Report (1982) Experience and Participation, cmnd 8686, London, HMSO.

Any information which is supplementary to the main text should be noted by a number in parentheses and listed in numerical order at the end of the article before the references, under the title of Notes.

Address for All Correspondence:
Youth and Policy,
10 Lady Beatrice Terrace,
New Herrington,
Houghton le Spring, DH4 4NE.

CONTENTS

ISSN 0262-9798

Monica Barry
The Empowering Process:
Leading from behind? 1

Sarah Banks
Youth Work, Informal Education and Professionalisation
The issues in the 1990s 13

Judith Bessant and Megan Evans
Gendering the Youth Work Curricula in Australia
A case study 26

Gary Pollock
Unemployed and under 18:
Struggling between Subsistence and Destitution 38

Working Space · Matt Vaughan
Finding your way around
Starting Out in Detached Work 54

Book Reviews 58

Subscription Page 112